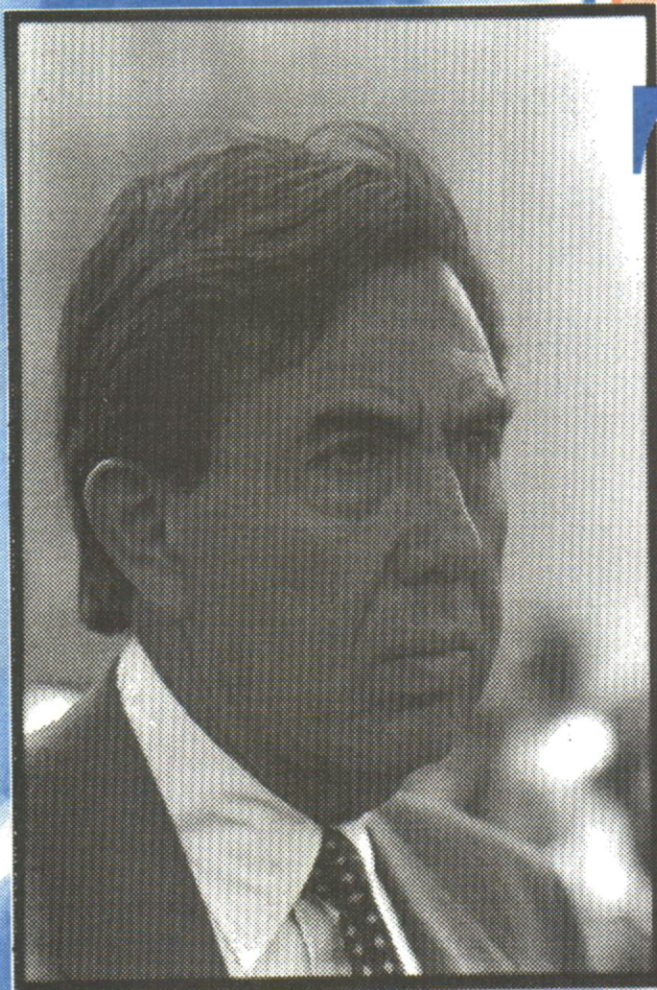


TOP STORY: THE SECRET OF THE REPUBLICANS' SUCCESS
July 25 - August 7, 1994

In THE SETTIMES

the alternative newsmagazine



The man who should be president

Mexico's
Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas,
robbed of victory in the
fraudulent 1988 election,
is facing another uphill fight.

Rick Rockwell reports

page 12

\$2.50 / CANADA \$3.00



EDITORIAL

GOOD ADVICE ON NUCLEAR ARMS FROM GEN. GOODPASTER

Last year the Assembly of the World Health Organization (WHO) requested that the World Court rule on whether the "use of nuclear weapons by a state in war or other armed conflict" would violate international law. The Court agreed to do so, and set a deadline of June 10 for governments to submit written evidence on the legal status of nuclear weapons. By the deadline several countries, including North Korea, Ireland, Mexico, Sweden, New Zealand, Lithuania, Papua New Guinea, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan, had submitted statements indicating that they considered the use of nuclear weapons to be illegal, and encouraged the court to proceed.

But the United States, France, Germany and Britain have opposed the WHO request. Initially, Japan announced that it, too, would join the Western powers, but it was forced to withdraw its statement in the face of overwhelming public

With atomic weapons no longer needed to maintain U.S. world domination, it's possible to think about eliminating nuclear arms worldwide.

opposition at home. Nor were the Japanese people alone. Even in this country, some in establishment ranks have begun to question the utility, if not the legality, of nuclear arms.

The nuclear arms race began in 1945, when the Truman administration decided to drop atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and, along with Britain, to keep nuclear knowledge from the Soviet Union. These decisions were the first acts of the Cold War. They were intended to signal the U.S. intention to dominate the postwar world and its power to do so. But as most of the leading nuclear physicists had warned, fail-

ure to share the "secret" simply initiated a nuclear arms race. It was only a matter of time before the Soviets would make their own bomb, they said. And, of course, they were right.

In the following decades, both sides created tens of thousands of strategic and tactical nuclear weapons. But as this mad race went on, it became clear to the sane members of the military establishments in Washington and Moscow that the bombs would never be used. The only military purpose of the atom bomb was to prevent the other side from using one. Nevertheless, the nuclear arms race served the political purposes of the rulers of both major competitors, so despite various efforts to control or reduce nuclear arms, the competition continued until

the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Today, however, it is increasingly clear that nuclear arms are useless to the major powers. The United States now has no powerful enemies and possesses overwhelming superiority of "conventional" weaponry and force. While useless to the United States, nuclear weapons are increasingly attractive to an array of secondary and even third-level powers as equalizers or prestige providers. As a result, nuclear weapons are coming to be seen as a potential source of destabilization for the new U.S.-dominated world order. In short, we have reached the point where sanity and imperial interest coincide, at least as far as nuclear war is concerned.

The first serious proposal to eliminate nuclear arms has been made by retired Gen. Andrew Goodpaster, co-chair of the prestigious Atlantic Council of the United States. Gen. Goodpaster writes in a report titled "Further Reins on Nuclear Arms" that the goal of non-proliferation and nuclear arms reduction activities should now be "zero option." First, he proposes that we narrow the role of existing nuclear weapons to deter their use or threatened use by others. Then he proposes a three-step process that would begin with a U.S.-Russian reduction of nuclear stockpiles to between 1,500 and 2,000 warheads each.

The next stage would be a multilateral reduction of the five major nuclear powers' arsenals to 200 warheads each. And finally, after the negotiation of an international no-first-use treaty and the development of effective detection systems, "the complete abolition and elimination of nuclear weapons worldwide."

Goodpaster's report comes at a time when the Department of Defense is conducting an internal review of the U.S. nuclear posture, to be followed by discussions in the National Security Council and then Congress. This is the first such review since 1978. Unfortunately, there is little reason to hope that the initiative taken by Goodpaster will be adopted by the Defense Department. Even so, Goodpaster's report creates an opportunity for popular participation in this debate and the mobilization of pressure on the Clinton administration to move toward the abolition of nuclear arms.

IN THESE TIMES
 "...with liberty and justice for all"

Editor: James Weinstein
Managing Editor: Miles Harvey
Senior Editors: Patricia Aufderheide,
 David Moberg, Salim Muwakkil
Asst. Managing Editor/Books Editor:
 David Futrelle
In Person Editor: Joel Bleifuss
European Editor: Diana Johnstone
New York Editor: Daniel Lazare
Education Editor: Alex Molnar
Contributing Editors: Peter Karman,
 Ilan Stavans, Jim McNeill
Washington Correspondent:
 John Canham-Clyne
Eastern Europe Correspondent:
 Paul Hockenros
Far East Correspondent: Dave Lindorff
Film Critics: Pat Dowell, Patricia Aufderheide
Copy Editor: George Hodak
Typo: Jim Rinnert
Editorial Interns: Aushra Abouzeid,
 Jake Blankenship, Genevieve Futrelle,
 Anastasia McRae, Shawn Neidorf,
 Edward Siskel, Rebecca Waugh
Art Director: Peter Hannan
Associate Art Director: Lisa Weinstein
Asst. Art Director/Photographer: David Schulz
Cartoonist: Terry LaBan

Publisher: James Weinstein
Associate Publisher: Beth Schulman
Assistant Publisher: Claudia Morris

Business Manager: Robert Larson
Circulation Director: Etelka Lehoczyk
Advertising Director: Bruce Embrey
Office Manager: Theresa Nutall

(ISSN 0160-5992)

Published 26 times a year by the Institute for Public Affairs, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 772-0100. Member: Alternative Press Syndicate. The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright © 1994 by the Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Copies of *In These Times* contract with the National Writers Union are available upon request. Complete issues and volumes of *In These Times* are available from University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, MI. Selected articles are available on 4-track cassette from Freedom Ideas International, 640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217. All rights reserved. *In These Times* is indexed in both the Alternative Press Index and the Left Index. Publisher does not assume liability for unsolicited manuscripts or material. Manuscripts or material unaccompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope will not be returned. All correspondence should be sent to: *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. Subscriptions are \$34.95 a year (\$59 for institutions; \$61.95 Canada; \$75.95 overseas). For customer service and to place subscription orders, call toll free: (800) 827-0270. Advertising rates sent on request. Available back issues are \$5 each; specify volume and number. All letters received by *In These Times* become property of the newspaper. We reserve the right to print letters in condensed form. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 1912 Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054. This issue (Vol. 18, No. 18) published July 25, 1994 for newsstand sales July 25-August 7, 1994.

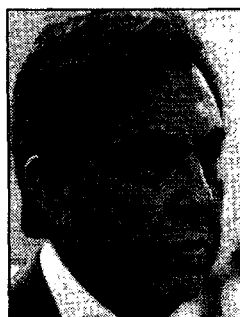


InTHESETIMES

CONTENTS

Volume 18, Number 18

© 1992 CHRISTOPHER TAGAKI/IMPACT VISUALS
 © 1994 PETER HANNAN
 © 1994 JIM WEST/IMPACT VISUALS



The man who
 should be president
Mexico's Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas,
robbed of his victory in the
1988 election, faces
another uphill battle.

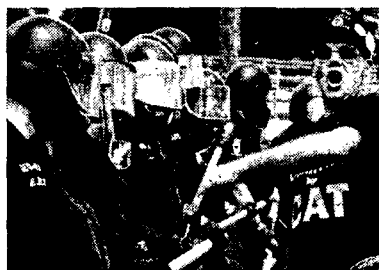
RICK ROCKWELL

12

Clobbering Clinton
Nixon may be gone, but his
dirty tricks live on among
today's Republicans.

ROBERT PARRY

16



Two strikes
How Staley and Caterpillar
have turned Illinois into a
war zone for labor.

DAVID MOBERG

19

FEATURES

- Black America in black and white • Salim Muwakkil22
 Covering death with dishonor in North Korea • Bruce Cumings25

REVIEWS

- Film: Forrest Gump, vidiot savant • Pat Dowell28
 Television: The Hobbesian world of *Models Inc.* • Scott McLemee30
 Books: Politics versus literature • Ilan Stavans.....32
 Yugoslavia's descent into the abyss • Kenneth Zapp.....35
 Speed Reading • David Futrelle and Chris Faatz.....36

DEPARTMENTS

- Letters4
 Sylvia • Nicole Hollander4
 Huge Mouth • Peter Hannan.....5
 In Short6
 Appall-O-Meter • Woody Igou.....6
 Media Beat • Pat Aufderheide8
 Rough Cuts • J.A. Reid9
 In Person • David Bryden10
 Etc. • Edward Siskel.....10
 Classifieds37

LETTERS

Gun shortage?

Michael Klare's article on small arms (*ITT*, July 11) is quite a bizarre piece of work. He ignores the political, economic and social factors behind war and places the blame on the availability of rifles and grenades. He deliberately ignores areas where the *lack* of small arms in the hands of democratic forces is a problem. In Guatemala and El Salvador, for example, the army and death squads dominate an under-armed guerrilla movement. In Haiti a few thousand fascists dominate the entire, *unarmed*, population.

Klare is misinformed about events in Rwanda. The RPF fighters pictured on the cover, armed with Romanian AKs, are members of a multi-ethnic, one-third Hutu, force fighting to end

the ethnic violence. The hundreds of thousands murdered in Rwanda were, according to eyewitness accounts in the *Los Angeles Times*, hacked to death with pangas, machetes and hatchets by gangs of Hutu thugs who were paid by the army. Modern small arms played only a minor role in the mass killings. And in Kashmir it is not "soldiers" who are dying. It is the occupying Indian Army that has tortured and killed thousands of unarmed Muslims who are defended by a small, poorly armed guerrilla group.

Modern assault rifles are no more lethal than the 9mm Sten guns, manufactured illegally by Haganah, used in the massacre at Deir Yassin. Dr. Baruch Goldman of Hebron was a uniformed reservist in the Israeli army and was *officially* issued a weapon.

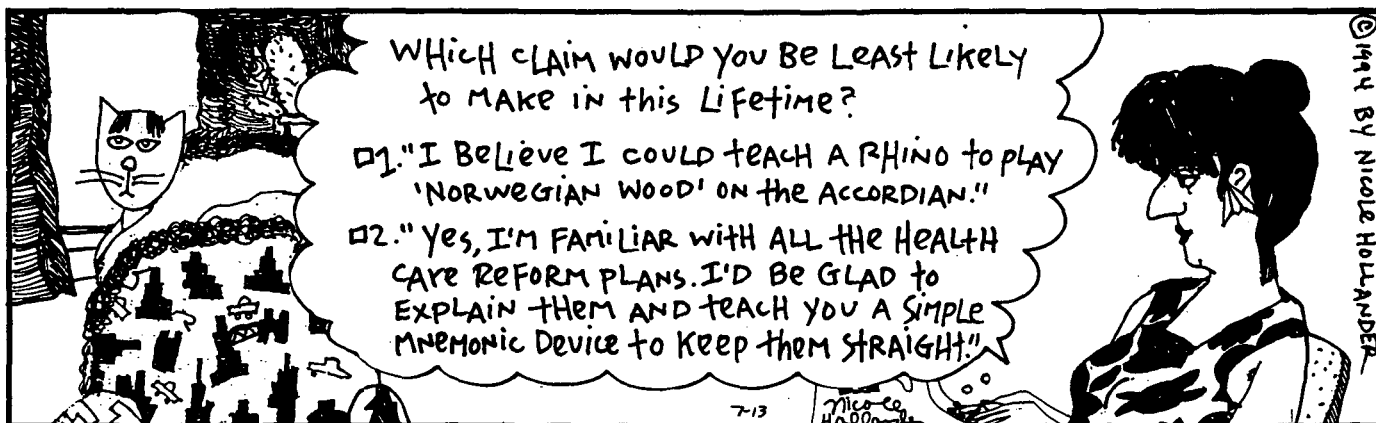
The submachine gun and automatic rifle have existed since the end of World War I. The World War II StG 43-44s are usually considered the first assault rifles, and the AK-47 has been around almost 50 years. The U.S. M-2 carbine cycled at 750 rounds per minute, weighed 5.5 pounds and had a 30-round detachable magazine—just like the Galil. The M-2 was issued in 1944! Some of the new weapons are lighter and shorter, but most are just as heavy as many World War II weapons. Klare is either indulging in hysteria-mongering or has not done his research.

The rifles in the photo from Yugoslavia are 7.92mm Mausers designed in 1898 and manufactured in Yugoslavia. The international arms trade has *nothing* to do with the violence there. The arms and munitions used in the fighting were domestically produced. The vast majority of casualties in Sarajevo and Goradze were caused by shells from heavy mortars and tank cannons—the Bosnians are handicapped as they have only small arms. Large mortars of 81-82mm and 120mm require trained personnel and are not guerrilla weapons. The Chetnik and Ustashi fascist forces are armed and trained by ex-members of the Yugoslavian Army—thus they have tanks and artillery.

The tiny number of M16s supplied to Somalia—4,800 in total—has very little to do with the violence. They were supplied after the Ethiopians, our

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



old ally, dumped us for the Soviets in 1975. Prior to that, Siad Barre's army received its arms from the Soviets. The U.S. mission failed because the United States did not coordinate with the U.N. or respect Somali politics.

G. Embree
Los Angeles

Michael Klare responds: While G. Embree makes some interesting points, nothing he says dilutes my main findings: (1) an ever-growing abundance of light weapons is fueling ethnic and regional wars, making them deadlier and harder to stop; (2) the light weapons available on international markets are increasingly lethal in their effects; (3) the world community has done almost nothing to stem the global trade in light weapons. With respect to Rwanda, while it is certainly true that many killings have been performed with machetes and other primitive weapons, much of the slaughter is the work of Hutu militias armed with government-supplied assault guns.

No threat?

Having just read Robert Parry's hysterical article "Oliver's army" (ITT, June 27), I must say I think he is resorting to the role of a demagogue himself by exaggerating the danger of Oliver North being elected to the U.S. Senate seat for Virginia.

The fact is that even prominent Republicans like Sen. John Warner have repudiated North, and ex-President Ronald Reagan has gone so far as to brand North as the liar he is. I have never been a fan of Warner or Reagan, but their influence in this race has been healthy to the extent that it has helped establish an environment in which North cannot win. The bigger problem is that the Democrats here in Virginia have become so corrupt with power that they can offer the voters no better alternative than a gutless ward-

heeler like Sen. Chuck Robb for reelection. That is the real reason why so many Virginians are turning in disgust to independent candidates such as Marshall Coleman and L. Douglas Wilder, or is that stark reality too inconvenient for Parry?

Paul Hickey
Fairfax, Va.

Self-imposed impasse

A brief look at history goes a long way toward explaining the present implosion of the Clinton health care proposal. National health care has been on the agenda since the days of Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman. Medicare and Medicaid date from Lyndon Johnson, and every recent congressional session has seen proposals for extended coverage.

No serious effort to extend such coverage has been made in the interim because the period since the '40s found U.S. companies without effective competition in the world markets. Many such companies gave union workers health benefits in lieu of wage increases. As a result, there were no major sources of pressure on Congress. That is, until the '70s and '80s.

As foreign competition grew, leading businessmen such as Lee Iacocca found that the health benefits obtained through union bargaining were developing into a major burden on production costs, with adverse effects on competitiveness.

From the beginning, government has been a favorite resort for shifting burdens from the backs of business. From roads, canals and land grants to

the outright extension of monies to ailing firms, business has always looked to government for support. So it is now with health care.

The Clintons, however, have fumbled the opportunity. Aside from flawed cost analysis, they propose placing a mandated burden on business. No wonder major business groups object. Single-payer would avoid this problem by spreading the costs over the entire population. Despite partisan cries of socialism, it is more than likely that businesses, both large and small, would once again be happy to accept this transfer of burden from their backs—after all, their major competitors have not found this solution unacceptable. Or is this too rational for Congress?

Carl Schiffer
Rye, N.Y.

Correction

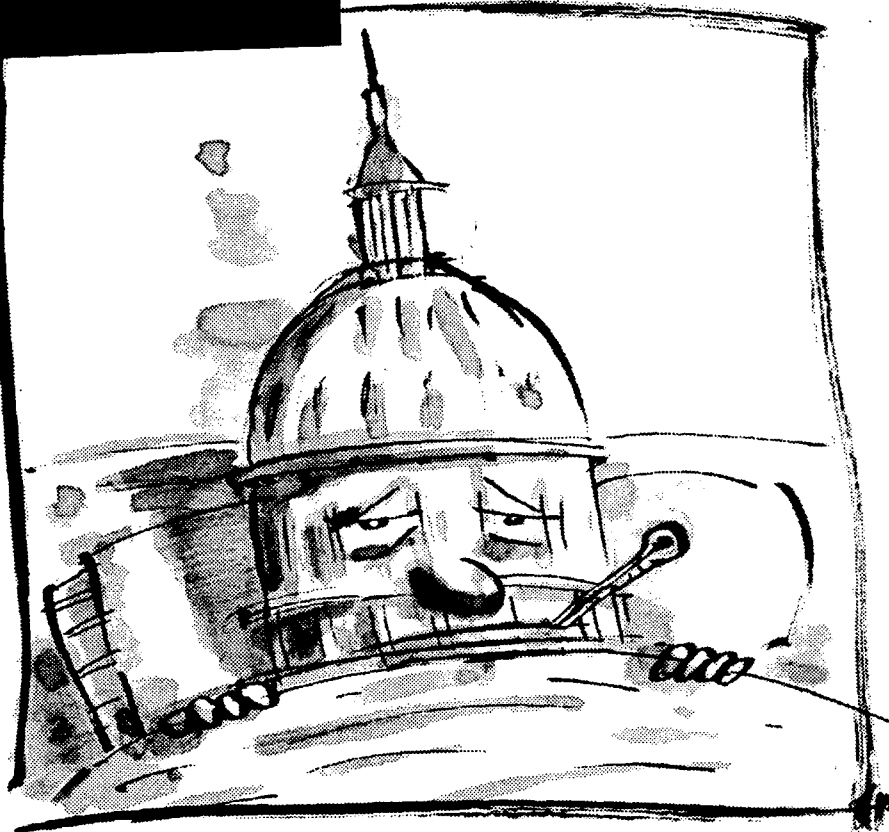
In Miles Harvey's "Bummer Vacations" (ITT, June 27) writer Joy Williams should have been quoted as describing the Everglades as a "once astounding ecosystem." An ellipsis should have followed the phrase.

THE ADVENTURES OF A HUGE MOUTH

by Peter Hannan



InSHORT



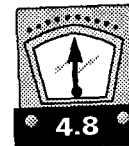
CRIPPLING THE SINGLE-PAYER PLAN

The good news: supporters of single-payer, Canadian-style national health insurance will probably see the House vote on their proposal this session. The bad news: it will almost certainly be voted down. Since the alternative health care plans are weak, single-payer advocates are now focusing their attention on efforts to guarantee that states will have the right to implement Canadian-style plans. While all of the bills that have emerged from committee include this state option, two of them would cripple the alternative with exemptions and restrictions. The bill that came out of the House Ways and Means committee, for example, excludes employees of big, multi-state corporations—roughly one-fourth of the labor force. It also establishes a complicated procedure for states to apply for federal permission, including a three-year delay before Medicare recipients could be included. By excluding so many citizens, state plans could not gain maximum efficiency.



By Woody Igou

Holy terror—or it's called politics, dear
Recently converted Christian-right lapdog Sen. Bob Dole has accused Democrats of "appealing to religious bigotry" in their attacks on the religious right.



Dole was responding to comments by Rep. Vic Fazio (D-CA) and

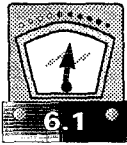
Texas Gov. Ann Richards describing the religious right as "fire-breathing radicals" and "hate mongers." Of course, these comments were a response to the Rev. Jerry Falwell's selling of baseless videotapes accusing President Clinton of murdering political opponents and to the Christian Coalition's description of the president's inauguration as a "repudiation of our forefathers' covenant with God."

*Dole's running mate in '96—
Jim Bakker, he's pale and rested.*

Timeless temper
Karate instructor Teruyuki Higa has been charged with sexually assaulting a woman in New York because of the T-shirt she was wearing.

© PETER HANNAN

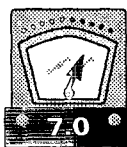
Unfortunately for the victim,
her T-shirt bore
the name of
Higa's rival
karate teacher,
Oyata, who
apparently
humiliated Higa 40 years ago.



Nice mind control, Grasshopper.

Italian update, or Ship of Fools

Italy's neo-fascist National Alliance recently chartered the *Achille Lauro*—on which an American Jewish hostage was killed by Palestinian hijackers—for a fundraising fun-and-frolic cruise. As to why the infamous boat was chosen by the party, one supporter disingenuously noted, "It simply didn't seem to occur to anybody." Meanwhile, in Italian fashion circles, the chic



fashion houses of Dolce and Gabanna have found inspira-

tion for their 1995 summer collection in Mafia turncoat Tommaso Buscetta. The "Buscetta look"—made famous by the ex-don's presence at televised trials—consists of dark jackets, open-necked white shirts, shiny shoes and dark glasses.

Italy: an emerging finishing school for the new Russia.

APPALL-O-METER SCALE

1. Weightless banality
2. Green Acres stupid
3. Malicious cretinism
4. Howard Sternesque
5. Mary Matalin mean
6. Gangrenous venality
7. A touch of evil
8. A cancer in the Zeitgeist
9. Et tu, Pol Pot?
10. Horseperson of the Apocalypse

In opposing the Ways and Means bill, Rep. Jim McDermott (D-WA), the chief House sponsor of single-payer legislation, said, "The real issue here is that the insurance industry wants to kill the state single-payer option because they are afraid that it will work too well." A referendum on a state single-payer plan is on this fall's ballot in California, and there are already strong single-payer movements in several states.

Despite the shift to the states, Cathy Hurwit, legislative director for the national Citizens Action organization, argues that single-payer will retain political influence in large part because of continued demonstrations of its superiority.

For example, contrary to the image of Canadians and other citizens in countries with national health insurance going without care and waiting in lines, two recent General Accounting Office studies concluded that rationing of expensive medical therapies is more of a problem in the United States than in countries with single-payer systems. Also, the Employee Benefits Research Institute recently reported that most employers—especially those smaller employers who now provide insurance—would pay less for health insurance under a single-payer plan.

In April, 112 House members urged President Clinton to ensure that a strong state single-payer option be included in any health care package. "Having single-payer out there is more than symbolic," Hurwit said. "As the debate continues and alternatives get more and more complex, single-payer looks better and better." Yet it will be up to individual states to prove that superiority. Thus, in the battle for federal health care legislation, preserving the state option without crippling restrictions has become a critical single-payer goal.

—David Moberg

NAACP FOLLOWS CHAVIS' LEAD

The Rev. Benjamin Chavis emerged from the 85th annual conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in Chicago a stronger executive director than he was before the gathering.

Since assuming leadership in April 1993, Chavis has taken the venerable civil rights organization in new directions. Although this has resulted in a 25 percent increase in membership, it has rattled those who were content with the NAACP's old direction. But Chavis' flight from orthodoxy also has provoked the concerns and questions of more thoughtful members as well.

For example, how does he reconcile his support—or at least his solicitude—for the Nation of Islam's (NOI) separatist agenda with the NAACP's historic struggle for integration? Why has he lobbied against penalties for corporations accused of dumping toxic wastes? Why has he lent the NAACP's honorable name and reputation to a number of so-called "gang summits" that critics claim were mere publicity stunts?

Those are questions Chavis answered at the convention to the satisfaction of most critics. He explained that he respects the power of the NOI to inspire discipline and purpose in black youth, and he thinks the group's expertise could be useful in helping to ease the current urban crisis. He has lobbied against federal penalties for polluting corporations as a way to force Congress to come up with a more efficient way of distributing Superfund money for waste cleanups. And he is working with gang members because their initiation

of the gang truce movement indicates a readiness to change that should be encouraged.

What's more, Chavis did much to mollify other concerns about his relationship with the NOI by meeting with Jewish leadership in the week prior to the convention. He also reaffirmed his intentions to forge greater links with the Latino and Asian communities. "The demographics of America have changed," he said. "It's just not a black and white situation. There's a 'browning' of America. That's why I don't want to change the name. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People—people of color—is right on target."

Of course, there remain some who are not convinced. Michael Myers, the executive director of the New York Civil Rights Commission and a former NAACP assistant director, is one of Chavis' most vocal critics. He claims the 85-year-old organization has "been hijacked by black nationalist radicals." Denton Watson, the NAACP's former director of public relations, concurs. If Chavis' new direction goes unchallenged, Watson fears the group may develop into a "separatist movement that will only further confuse youths and strengthen their enemies."

Myers and Watson invariably are quoted for their anti-Chavis sentiments when journalists write their NAACP stories, but, according to internal polls, their opinions are shared by only about 1 percent of the membership. Talks with a wide range of conventioners and other reporters covering the event suggest that the 46-year-old Chavis is a popular figure. As he leads the NAACP into a new era, the membership seems eager to follow.

—Salim Muwakkil

NEW MOMENTUM FOR TEAMSTERS REFORM

Teamsters president Ron Carey, fresh from a string of victories in his effort to reform the union, now faces new challenges in making reform and democracy meaningful to the average Teamster member. In June, Carey successfully abolished the regional conference structure that provided an organizational platform—as well as patronage and perks—for his "old guard" opponents. And this month, the union's Independent Review Board (IRB)—established by federal courts to monitor and eliminate corruption—decisively vindicated Carey on charges of financial corruption, mob influence and a host of other allegations that had been circulated by his old-guard enemies. As a bonus, a federal judge threw out a \$50 million lawsuit against the union that was filed by United Parcel Service after a one-day strike over safety issues last February. Many old-guard leaders had tried to undermine the strike and had attacked Carey as irresponsible.

While clearing Carey, the IRB brought charges of continued mob links against Robert Simpson, the president of a big Chicago local, who is an international union trustee aligned with the old guard. Carey, meanwhile, is using the union's internal disciplinary structure to file charges of bribery, misappropriation of funds and other financial improprieties against the old-guard leaders of three New York-area locals. He's also cooperating with the U.S. attorney in an effort to break the mob hold on a Lake Success, N.Y., local.

Although federal district and appeals courts both refused to enjoin Carey's abolition of the four regional conferences, the old-guard leaders have regrouped as "The Real Teamster Caucus" to fight Carey, restore the confer-

MEDIA BEAT

By Pat Aufderheide

© PETER HANNAN



A pain in the bottleneck

A recent Supreme Court decision changes cable TV's First Amendment status.

The court ruled on whether the "must-carry" clause of the 1992 Cable Act is valid. That clause requires a cable outlet to carry all regional broadcast stations' signals, so as not to deprive cable households of "free" TV and diverse sources of information.

Broadcasters had eagerly lobbied for the clause, since not getting a cable slot—a fate befalling many smaller stations—has meant a large drop in viewers and therefore advertising dollars.

The Supreme Court sent the case back to the lower courts for more and better information. Broadcasters now will have to show that they suffer real financial damage when cabling doesn't carry their signals and that the must-carry law is not too powerful a remedy for the problem.

Perhaps more importantly, a 5-4 court majority ruled that cable's First Amendment rights are not as limited as those of broadcasters, who use the public airwaves and must serve the public interest. But neither are they entirely free of government regulation, because they act as an information "bottleneck."

The decision, written by Jus-

Justice Anthony Kennedy, says that cable's control over information is far greater than that of a newspaper, even in a one-newspaper town (like most are these days). After all, that daily newspaper doesn't stop you from reading *In These Times* or a local free weekly.

But a cable operator controls your access to all the signals coming into your TV set. "A cable operator, unlike speakers in other media, can thus silence the voice of competing speakers with a mere flick of the switch," according to the decision.

Citing "the potential for abuse"—while not even mentioning the long history of such abuse—the decision says the First Amendment doesn't stop the government from "taking steps to ensure that private interests not restrict, through physical control of a critical pathway of communication, the free flow of information and ideas."

Veteran public interest media lawyer Andrew Jay Schwartzman was pleased at the precedent-setting case, although he noted with concern that the arrival of the new industry-friendly justice, Stephen Breyer, could change the vote next time. (See *In These Times*, July 25.)

"After years of ducking the issue, the Supreme Court finally spoke for the first time on what First Amendment framework will be applied to the new technologies," he said. "Justice Kennedy's decision strongly endorses the First Amendment principle that government can and should regulate mass media to avoid bottlenecks and preserve the free flow of information."

©1994 Pat Aufderheide

ences and weaken the presidency at the 1996 convention, if not earlier.

Conference leaders have portrayed themselves as fighting for democracy—but they have often seemed more intent on preserving power and privilege. Southern Conference chairman Jerry Cook, for example, arranged to resign hours before the conferences were eliminated so that its policy committee could vote to give him the Lincoln Town Car that the union had previously provided for him. "We're taking away their golf outings, not their free speech," said Ken Paff, organizer of Teamsters for a Democratic Union, a reform group that generally supports Carey.

The charges against Carey had stemmed from opposition-promoted rumors and stories in *Time*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Times* and other publications. These stories insinuated that Carey had close ties to several mobsters and had been guilty of many financial improprieties, including receiving money from employers or organized crime groups to buy several condos and houses as investment properties.

But the IRB—noting that many of the allegations came from anonymous callers, aides to union opponents and a disgruntled trustee of one local—concluded that there were no grounds for proceeding with disciplinary charges against Carey on any of the 18 allegations. The report not only redeems Carey but effectively portrays his critics' attacks as a baseless smear campaign.

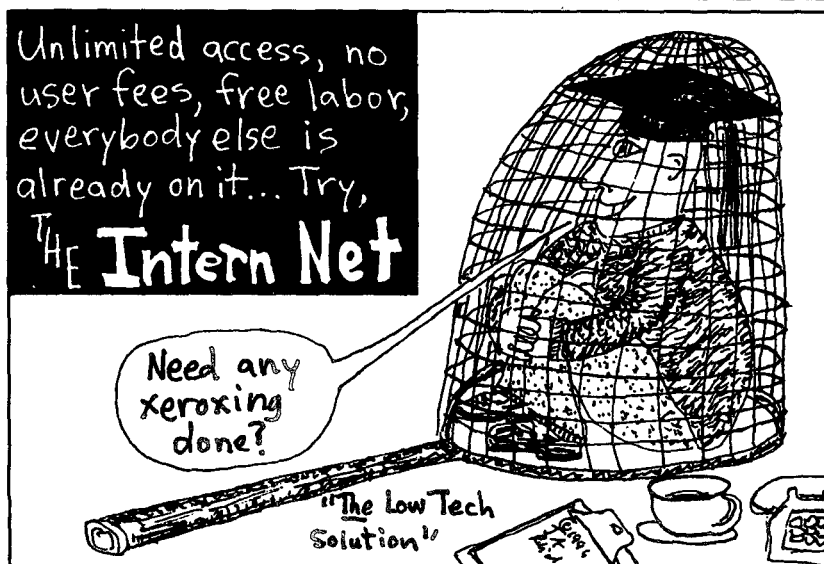
Having cleared his name and dethroned his opponents, Carey must now demonstrate what he can do for the union. Carey will need to initiate a new program to make members and local officials integrally involved in union reform. There is a danger in relying too much on the powers of the central union and in assuming that members can be won over simply with continued attacks on an "old guard."

At a time when Carey must deliver real gains to win members' support, the union continues to suffer from an unresolved financial crisis. (See *In These Times*, April 4.) Carey must hope he can tap the energies of the Teamsters rank and file, whether it's for organizing or voluntary strike support. "In this warfare period," Paff said, describing the two years that will lead up to the next union election, "we've really got to mobilize the members."

—David Moberg

ROUGH CUTS

By JA Reid





HUNGER FOR JUSTICE

Jennifer Harbury fights for Guatemalan POWs

Cases of incommunicado detention and torture by the Guatemalan army are nothing new to Jennifer Harbury. But Case No. 11.129 at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has a special meaning for this Harvard-educated

lawyer because it is that of her Mayan husband, Efraim Bamaca.

Bamaca is one of the top commanders in the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG) rebel coalition that has been waging a guerilla war against Guatemala's military-dominated government for more than three decades. The army claims Bamaca, then 35, killed himself rather than be captured after a gun battle two years ago. But Harbury, 43, maintains that her husband and 35 other URNG fighters are being held and tortured by the Guatemalan army in an attempt to turn them into informants. Since Bamaca's disappearance Harbury has been waging an unprecedented, at times dangerous, campaign to expose the army's use of clandestine torture centers. Despite the rise to the presidency last year of Ramiro de León Carpio, the country's former human rights ombudsman, Guatemala's human rights nightmare has worsened.

ETC.

By Edward Siskel

Sleeping with the "enemy"

In the last issue of *In These Times*, David Evans reported that the Lockheed Corp. is attempting to sell Congress on continued funding for the F-22 fighter, a plane whose primary mission died with the Cold War. Lockheed argues that the F-22 is still necessary as a defense against heavily armed friends who may be future enemies. A Lockheed brochure lists Egypt as one of those potential foes.

But that hasn't stopped Lockheed from dealing with the Egyptian government. In fact, a federal grand jury in Atlanta recently indicted Lockheed and two of its executives on charges of violating the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and conspiracy to commit wire fraud. The arms manufacturing company and executives Suleiman A. Nassar and Allen R. Love are accused of paying more than \$1 million to an Egyptian lawmaker in order to secure for Egypt a \$79 million contract for three C-130 Hercules Aircraft.

Oak Ridge nukes

Residents living near the Department of Energy's (DOE) 51-year-old nuclear weapons facility at Oak Ridge, Tenn., have long complained of health problems due to radiation leaks and other pollution from the complex. A new study, authored by Joseph J. Mangano of the New York-based Radiation and Public Health Project, appears to back them up. It shows that between 1950 and 1989,

deaths for residents of 94 counties near Oak Ridge were more than 20,000 in excess of national trends.

"This study indicates the Oak Ridge Reservation may affect a much larger area than we ever thought," says Janice Stokes, spokesperson for Citizens for Better Health, a community group concerned with the health and environment of Oak Ridge-area residents.

Waffling on worker rights

Worker-rights advocates are expressing frustration that the Clinton administration is once again stalling on sanctions against labor abuses in Guatemala. U.S. trade programs currently provide duty-free benefits for over 20 percent of Guatemala's exports to the United States. In 1992 the U.S. government agreed to review those benefits, which are supposed to be conditioned on Guatemala's progress on worker rights. Late last year, U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor extended the review for six months; he's just announced another three-month extension. U.S. unions and human rights groups argue, however, that since there has been no concrete progress on worker rights, the U.S. government should increase trade pressure on Guatemala. "We're gravely disappointed that the administration [has] failed to respond to congressional requests to increase trade pressure on Guatemala by suspending duty-free treatment of sugar," explains Pharis Harvey, executive director of the International Labor Rights Education and Research Fund.

Harbury was working for Texas Rural Legal Aid in 1982 when she met survivors of massacres by the Guatemalan army who had begun streaming across the U.S. border. Traveling to Guatemala in 1985, she took down testimony of human rights abuses. Returning in 1990, she chronicled the life stories of URNG combatants, collecting these stories into a book titled *Bridge of Courage*, published earlier this year by Common Courage Press. During this visit she met Bamaca at a URNG camp. "At first, I couldn't believe he was the commander," she says. "He was so unassuming and soft-spoken." The two fell in love.

She then returned to Texas to finish her book. But in the summer of 1991, Harbury received word that Bamaca was in Mexico preparing for the peace talks. "I went straight down ... and we ended up getting married. His theory was that you only get so much space in life ... who knows how long it will last." They were together only seven months; then the peace talks bogged down and Bamaca left to lead the rebels back into battle. The next thing Harbury heard was that he had vanished after a firefight on March 12, 1992. The next day the army said it had found a body clad in olive green and had sent it for burial.

Harbury assumed her husband was dead. But in December of 1992, a URNG combatant who had escaped from army custody claimed to have twice seen Bamaca alive, in clandestine torture centers. The army, however, insisted that the witness was lying. So Harbury demanded an exhumation of what the army claimed was Bamaca's body. Forensic specialists found that the body was not her husband's, but that of another, much younger combatant.

Harbury believes that Bamaca is more valuable to the army alive than dead. "My husband knows everything about the URNG that there is to know. Also, he would be a great negotiating chip for the army at the peace talks, since the URNG wants him back very badly."

"The army must have captured my husband and then killed and buried some other prisoner," she says. "The only thing they hadn't counted on was someone who would come down and insist on looking at the body and the files. No Guatemalan could get away with that."

In an audacious move, Harbury went on a hunger strike at the Politecnica, the elite military academy in Guatemala City. For seven days and nights she camped out on a grassy median in front of the forbidding building.

"People in the Politecnica just stared, they couldn't believe their eyes," she says. The response of the Guatemalan people was heartwarming. "People were driving by, honking their horns and raising their fists, shouting, 'Viva Bamaca!' And people came to talk about the family they had lost, their wife, their husband, their child. It got to be a lot like the Vietnam Memorial in that way, with everyone coming out to talk about who they had lost."

The case has become an international issue, and last year the Organization of American States ordered Guatemala to ensure the safety of Bamaca and the prisoners. Guatemala responded by arguing that it was not at war and, therefore, it could not have prisoners of war.

But in a significant change of tone, Defense Minister Mario Enriquez told a group of U.S. congressional aides last January that he "would search for Bamaca."

Harbury believes that the case "could be nearing a turning point." She says she will abandon her campaign only when the prisoners are placed in a public detention center, with access to medical care and human rights monitors.

—David Bryden

MEXICO

Round two

By rights, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas should now be in Los Pinos, the Mexican presidential residence, nearing the end of a six-year term. Instead Cárdenas—who narrowly lost the scandal-ridden election of 1988—is struggling in third place during a wildly unpredictable campaign for president.

After being denied his victory in the fraudulent 1988 election, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas struggles to avoid another loss.

By Rick Rockwell
MEXICO CITY

Why is the man who should be Mexico's president stuck 20 points behind the leaders in the polls? "Let me use an American political saying," says Lorenzo Mayer, a Mexican political analyst. "Nothing succeeds like success; nothing fails like a failure. People just see Cárdenas as a failure." Imagine the Democrats running Michael Dukakis again in the last election instead of Bill Clinton, and you see the problem. Mexicans seem unwilling to give Cárdenas a second chance in the August

21 presidential election.

But to tag Cárdenas as a loser isn't exactly fair, since he almost certainly won in 1988. In June, Arturo Nuñez, chief of the Federal Election Institute (IFE), revealed that the institute created a computer crash in 1988 when it appeared that Cárdenas was running away with the election. When the vote was compiled without the computer, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, the candidate of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), was declared the winner by the slimmest margin in modern Mexican history.

Up until 1987 Cárdenas, a former governor of Michoacán, was a member of the PRI. But when it became obvious that the left wing of the party was going to be ignored again during the presidential succession, he took most of that faction with him to form the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD). He's been running for president ever since.

"This is a struggle for democracy, for free elections, for the rights of the people," Cárdenas often proclaims during his speeches. "We cannot wait for effective suffrage, the imposi-

tion of the slow process started by Carlos Salinas."

For decades the PRI alternated presidencies between its left and right factions. Cárdenas' father, Gen. Lázaro Cárdenas, is probably the leading example of a left-wing president. He gave away more land to peasants in the '30s than any president before or since, and he also nationalized the oil fields. In 1988, after two successive right-wing presidents, the country was overdue for some balance from the left. But the PRI, which has governed Mexico in one form or another since the 1917 revolution, wasn't ready to give the 1988 election to Cárdenas, who was viewed as a traitor for abandoning the party. This year may be no different, as the PRI offers up Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León, one of the architects of Mexico's neo-liberal economic plan.

By contrast, Cárdenas and the PRD have a left-leaning platform that seems to cover all the bases. Beyond calling for fair elections and more press freedom, Cárdenas wants to revive the land-reform program discontinued by the Salinas government. He also wants to curb current economic policies that improve the lot of the rich while putting more money into employment training and social programs. He is even bold enough to discuss the need for gay rights and better laws to end sexual discrimination.

Cárdenas can draw thousands of university students to a rally in Mexico City, and just as easily attract grandmothers to a rally in Morelos. At a recent speech in Cuernavaca, an elderly campesino who received land during the administration of Cárdenas' father pushed his way to the front of the crowd to personally hand the candidate a donation and a note of gratitude. During the same trip to Cuernavaca, transportation workers cheered Cárdenas' pledge to disentangle

the government from labor negotiations.

Yet Cárdenas' ability to draw crowds has not translated into a wider popularity with the electorate. Cárdenas' television image may be the main culprit. Televisa, the pro-government network that dominates the airwaves with about 80 percent of Mexican viewers, often skips showing Cárdenas. Cárdenas, moreover, is rarely a forceful public speaker. He often drones from prepared texts like a professor, getting caught up in the fine points of his plans.

And Cárdenas performed poorly during the country's first televised presidential debate in May. Unable to parry the witty criticisms of right-wing candidate Diego Fernández de Cevallos, Cárdenas appeared sullen and unprepared.

"TV is completely alien to him. It's going to be difficult for him to regain what he lost in the debate," Mayer says. "Cárdenas lost the most, but he's used to it by now. He just can't shake that loser image."

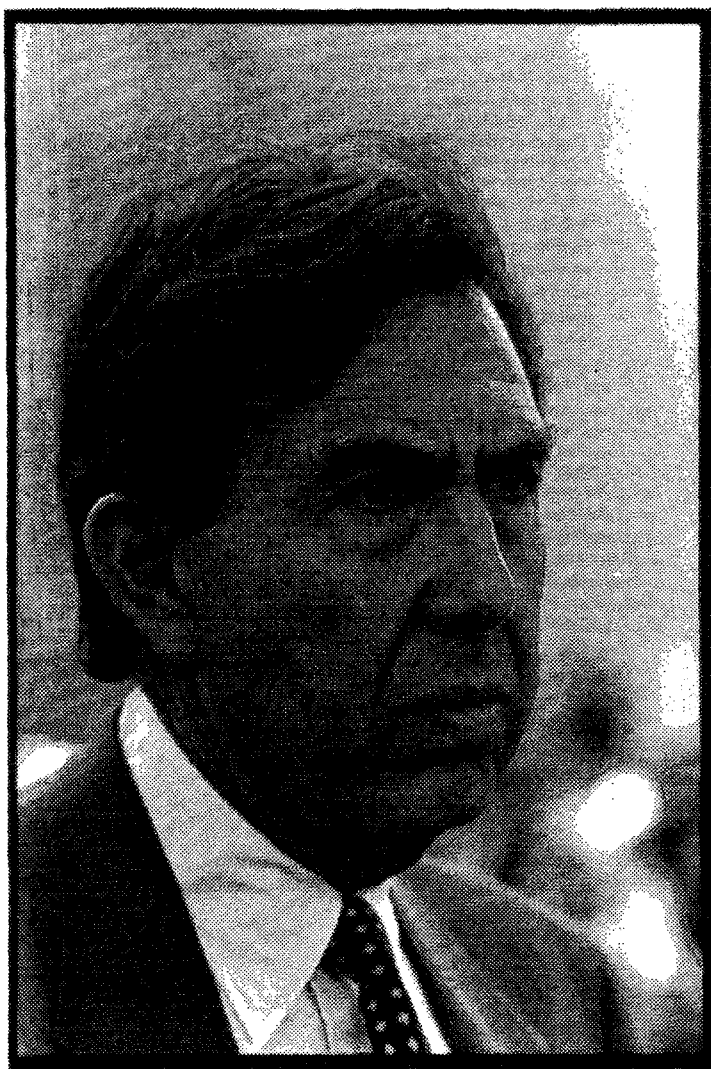
Days after the debate, Cárdenas suffered an embarrassing setback during a surprise visit to Chiapas, the stronghold of the Zapatista National Liberation Army. Although he is the only candidate who has met with Subcomandante Marcos and the Zapatistas, Marcos derided Cárdenas as just another politician in a corrupt political system. Forced to listen to a lecture by gun-toting guerrillas, Cárdenas came away from the meeting looking bruised and weak.

Coming off two defeats, Cárdenas sunk in the polls as Fernández, the winner of the television debate, surged. Though a recent poll by *Este País*, a Mexican magazine, gives Cárdenas the highest totals he's had in months, he still languishes in third place with 19 percent, compared to Zedillo's 23 percent and Fernández's 30 percent. (In that poll, 22 percent remained undecided; 6 percent went to six minor parties.)

Other polls suggest that Cárdenas' support is even more tenuous. A poll by Guadalajara University's Center for Opinion Studies, for example, shows Fernández with 33 percent, Zedillo with 28 percent and Cárdenas with 13 percent. One of Mexico City's newest papers, the center-left *Reforma*, recently published a poll showing Cárdenas with just 8 percent.

"Who can believe the polls?" asks Jose Carreño Figueras, a correspondent for *El Universal*, a centrist paper in Mexico City. "Even if we interview people in their homes, they are still afraid to talk, afraid to tell us who they will really vote for in August." Experts also note that most of the polls are done in urban areas, and much of the PRD's strength is rural. "No one knows Cárdenas' real strength," Carreño says. "He has great appeal in the countryside with people who believe he'll return to the policies of his father. But there's no guarantee of that."

Some of Cárdenas' problems almost certainly stem from the difficulties he faces in getting attention in the media.



Reforma runs a unique feature each week: It tracks mentions of the three major candidates in prominent publications. Zedillo usually dominates with about 1,000 mentions each week; typically, the totals for Cárdenas and Fernández together don't match the PRI candidate. Although about a third of all the coverage candidates receive is negative, *Reforma's* tracking doesn't reveal the full extent of the bias toward Zedillo.

In regions away from the capital, like Chiapas, where the media remain under the control of PRI-oriented publishers, Cárdenas' campaign may not generate much coverage at all. For instance, during late June, Cárdenas and Fernández both campaigned at a conference in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, the state capital of Chiapas. Fernández rated modest pieces inside most local papers. Zedillo's campaign in Mexico City was covered prominently. But the only mention of Cárdenas was a paragraph in response to political happenings in the capital.

Even so, many reporters are openly pro-Cárdenas. At a June rally at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), most of the press gallery was cheering Cárde-

nas and singing PRD campaign songs. Columnists inflated the number of people attending the rally in an attempt to revive Cárdenas' flagging campaign, comparing it to his triumphant UNAM appearance in 1988, when he carried the capital's votes. (Police officially estimated there were 3,000 people at the 1994 speech. Some columnists reported as many as 70,000. Actual numbers were probably closer to 12,000.) Pro-Cárdenas opinion often spills into print, but with coverage in many papers limited by editors, the information pendulum swings away from the PRD.

"Those who own newspapers are using them for their own business or political gain rather than to give information," Carreño argues. Though the PRI has curtailed its past practice of influencing coverage by funneling direct payments to news organizations, many publishers are finding it in their interest to stick with the PRI's party line. Many publishers share the business sector's belief that a PRI victory would ensure continued economic stability.

To counter the PRI's upper hand with the business sector, Cárdenas has recently shifted his emphasis to economic issues. It seems like a wise strategy, considering that polls show wages and unemployment as the top two concerns of the Mexican electorate. Although he opposed the North American Free Trade Agreement, Cárdenas says that, if elected, he would work with the trade pact. Also in late June, Cárdenas postponed a day of campaigning in Sinaloa to lay out his economic plans before a convention of entrepreneurs and developers in Chiapas.

At the convention, Cárdenas described in detail a plan for public investment, private loan guarantees and incentives that would spur investment by 25 percent. He predicted that the increased public programs could create up to 1 million new jobs and increase the country's economic growth by 6 percent annually. Even with the PRI's vaunted economic programs, the Mexican economy has grown slowly during the past 16 months, expanding at an annual rate of only 0.5 percent.

Noting a number of protests by ranchers in Chiapas on the same day as his speech, Cárdenas promised that landowners who had their property invaded by campesinos would be "protected by the letter of the law and the state." In the first six months of 1994, landless peasants in Chiapas seized 210,000 acres of land. A quarter of Mexico's land disputes are centered in Chiapas, so Cárdenas' words brought cheers from his conservative audience.

But at the end of the presentation, Bernardo Ardavia, the president of the developers' group, chastised Cárdenas for taking contradictory positions. Ardavia wondered where Cárdenas would find land to appropriate for campesinos if he revives Mexico's land-reform program, as he has promised. Respecting the deeds to property of owners hit by land invasions, while taking land away from them as part of reform "are not two separate issues," Ardavia argued. He labeled Cárdenas' position as "gray."

If Cárdenas cannot win the election outright by convincing Mexico's upper class of his moderate economic views,

then he is prepared to challenge the fairness of the balloting. Besides the obvious example of the fraudulent 1988 election, Cárdenas has other reasons to believe the PRI will use election tricks to win.

Already, Cárdenas has charged that there are 4 million phantom voters on the election rolls. The PRD revealed serious flaws in the country's new voter registration system when party investigators, posing as voters, were able to obtain multiple identification cards for themselves. But instead of securing the system, election officials filed fraud charges against the investigators. Skeptical of the election institute's commitment to fair elections, Cárdenas has called for the replacement of 2,000 institute officials with close ties to the PRI.

"The PRD is already acting like they've lost the election," complains Juan Molinar of the IFE. "They are disputing the results before it happens."

Sergio Aguayo, a founder of Civic Alliance, an independent group established to monitor the elections, is uncertain if the PRI will use fraud to stop the PRD. In Aguayo's opinion, in 1992, the PRI stole the state elections in Michoacán, where Cárdenas is strongest. He believes the PRD is very strong in the capital too, but, he says, the national polls indicate the PRI probably doesn't need fraud to beat Cárdenas this time.

However, there are other clues that suggest this election will be business as usual for the PRI. At the end of June, Interior Minister Jorge Carpizo, who oversees the election commission and who is regarded by most of the political parties as impartial, resigned. He cited pressures from an unnamed political party—assumed by most Mexicans to be the PRI—which he said was compromising the election. Cárdenas reacted by saying Carpizo's resignation showed an honorable man couldn't cope with a system filled with fraud. Zedillo countered by accusing the PRD's constant allegations for forcing Carpizo out and tainting the system. President Salinas convinced Carpizo to return to his post, and tried to assure the nation that he would turn over power peacefully if an opposition party won.

But is Cárdenas even up to the challenge of beating one of this century's best political machines? He leads a party that is so low on funds it hawks campaign bumper stickers and buttons instead of giving them away. His U.S. advertising firm has deserted him for nonpayment of bills, and he's had to quell nasty infighting inside his fledgling party. Given the tide of negative media representation, possible vote manipulation and image problems, Cárdenas seems a dour Don Quixote tilting against the sturdy windmill of the PRI. All that seems to be fueling his campaign now is the passion of Mexico's dispossessed and his own ambition.

"We now face a deep national crisis. We must force a change," Cárdenas says. He must hope that Mexicans are listening and watching this time, to guarantee this year will not replay 1988.

◀ **Rick Rockwell**, a graduate student at the University of Southern California, is currently living in Mexico City.

Mexico's crowd-pleasing conservative

College students hurling eggs aren't what a candidate wants to see at a campaign rally. But the instant eggs hit the podium at a recent speech by Diego Fernández de Cevallos, the candidate's image was elevated.

Mexicans learned Fernández doesn't duck.

Fernández, the presidential candidate for Mexico's right-wing opposition party, the National Action Party (PAN), is the surprise leader in many national polls. His ascension started in May when his casual yet combative style made him the clear winner of Mexico's first nationally televised presidential debate.

In June, he ventured on to the campus of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), Mexico's largest university, for a speech. Although about 8,000 supporters turned out for the event, hundreds of hecklers came prepared to shout down this first outdoor rally by a PAN candidate on their campus. The coordinated shouts of the hecklers and the response by PAN supporters forced Fernández to stop his speech five times. Then, out came the eggs.

Security guards quickly grabbed the candidate and huddled around him. But Fernández elbowed his way back to the microphones. "Those who attack this campaign do us honor," he thundered back to applause, and continued his speech for another 10 minutes. Such displays of machismo are exactly what may work in his favor to unseat Mexico's dominant Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).

"If PRI doesn't win, in my opinion, the election will go to PAN, because they are conservative," says Lorenzo Mayer, a leading Mexican political analyst. "They will put the economy and stability first. PRI doesn't represent stability anymore. That's why the U.S. will not back political fraud by the PRI this time."

Recent polls back Mayer's opinion. Fernández's strong showing during the debate, viewed by 30 million people, moved him from third to first in some polls. "Diego is showing up on television a lot," says Soledad Loaeza, a left-leaning political analyst from Mexico City. "Television has helped construct his image." The Mexican media has given Fernández a bit of a free ride. Since the PRI has borrowed many of the PAN's economic ideas during the presidency of Carlos Salinas de Gortari, Fernández's economic proposals find space in many mainstream news outlets.

Part of Fernández's appeal is his ability to perform in front of a crowd. The candidate, who has a beard, likes to swagger into a rally wearing cowboy boots or smoking a cigar. Sometimes, he swigs orange soda at the podium during his speeches. Mexicans usually refer to Fernández by his first name, while the other candidates retain the cold distance of their surnames. PAN campaign managers have sensed their candidates' common touch, and most posters or literature merely implore voters to cast a ballot for Diego.

Traditionally, the PAN is not a party of the masses, but of the Mexican middle class: doctors, lawyers, professors and small-business owners. Today, PANistas tend to be young entrepreneurial types, who condemn the social programs Mexico launched in the '30s. In other words, the PAN is the party of Mexico's emerging yuppie class. Since 1939 the PAN has played the part of loyal opposition to the PRI, settling for token seats in the national assembly. In the '80s, however, with Mexico's glacier-like move toward democracy, the PAN began winning significant grass-roots support, and the PRI was eventually forced to cede three governorships to their right-wing rivals.

During past national campaigns, the party has never captured more than 20 percent of the vote and has eschewed populist campaign tactics. But Fernández's appearance at UNAM, his frequent walks in the country's barrios and his television appearances show the party is willing to break out of that mold.

Fernández, a lawyer, charms crowds with his catchy rhetoric, but he provides few specifics of his political program. As Loaeza notes this is part of the PAN's appeal, masking its true intentions with a call for democratic changes and free markets. She labels Fernández "extraordinarily conservative" and "an ultra-militant Catholic" who brags that he's never officially filed for a marriage license because he was married in the church. He has openly noted that his priorities in life are God, family and then country, in that order. Fernández opposes contraception and rules out abortion under any circumstances—putting him at odds with Mexico's already restrictive abortion law, which allows the procedure only when a mother's life is endangered.

Beyond setting back women's rights, if Fernández and the PAN win the election they may undermine the secular tradition Mexico has adopted since the 1917 revolution. Combine that with the party's calls for a stronger military and privatizing much of the economy, and you have the recipe for a southern neighbor that only Jesse Helms could love.

Loaeza is one of the few who definitively predicts Fernández and the PAN will fail. "PAN's appeal is limited," Loaeza says. "It has no chance to win the election." Loaeza believes Fernández has done well in the polls because his party has strength in urban areas and the industrialized north, where it is easier to conduct polls. "They cannot carry the country."

Mayer is not so sure. "The young middle class is tired of waiting for opportunity," Mayer warns. "They won't let the PRI have another six-year guarantee." Fernández knows the growing middle class and pocketbook issues could help him win. During the debate, he let the PRI know, too, by branding their rule as a failure. He told Zedillo, a U.S.-trained economist, that he was "a good boy who got good grades, but your plan has left 40 million people in poverty."

Tart remarks and bold gestures in the midst of Mexico's wildest election of the century could give the contest to Fernández while hiding the true nature of his agenda.

—R.R.

THE PRESIDENCY

Bare-knuckle politics

Richard Nixon's legacy of "dirty tricks" lives on in the right-wing machine that is crippling the Clinton presidency.

By Robert Parry

In October 1970, Richard Nixon had an idea for punishing some White House reporters who were giving him a hard time. The president wanted to "put all the baddest guys on Air Force One" for his next trip, wrote Nixon's chief of staff H.R. Haldeman in his recently published diaries. Then, with the "baddest" reporters waiting on the presidential plane, Nixon would slip onto the press plane. Trapped in the gilded cage of Air Force One, Nixon's critics would look foolish, while their competitors on the press plane would get special access to the president.

It's not clear if Nixon ever implemented the Air Force One scheme, but it shows how determined he was to "screw" his enemies in big ways and small. By the fall of 1970, Nixon already had authorized a domestic intelligence opera-

tion against dissidents (the so-called Huston Plan); he had unleashed Vice President Spiro Agnew to stir up hatred against the "nattering nabobs of negativism"; and he had ordered Pat Buchanan and other aides to activate a campaign of "dirty tricks" against political opponents, a precursor to the Watergate "plumbers."

Ever the strategist, Nixon also saw the need to construct institutions to perpetuate his attack politics. To his disciples, he advocated a "project of building our establishment in press, business, education, etc.," Haldeman wrote.

Ultimately, Nixon's paranoid excesses—and his unpopularity with parts of Washington's establishment—led to the Watergate scandal and his political demise. But Nixon's hardball game did not end. Inside the conservative movement, it not only survived, it thrived.

Over the past 25 years, conservatives have expanded upon Nixon's "project." In the late '70s, Terry Dolan's National Conservative Political Action Committee pioneered high-tech negative campaigning. Reed Irvine's Accuracy in Media bashed reporters who dared cross the national security agencies. Conservative "think tanks" sprang up in Washington, along with dozens of right-wing magazines and newspapers. In the '80s, the Reagan administration added money and power to the mix by creating an aggressive "public diplomacy" bureaucracy that attacked foreign policy critics in Congress, the news media and liberal groups.

Today, Nixon's brainchild, this right-wing machine, is demonstrating its political maturity as it tries to chew up Bill Clinton's presidency. Conservative activists—armed with slickly produced videos, editorial-page dominance and a nationwide network of talk radio programs—are vowing to destroy Clinton politically and restore the White House to Republican control as soon as possible. Their chief weapon has been character assassination.

Going well beyond reasonable questions about the Clintons' Whitewater investments, the right is accusing the president of a wide range of crimes, from trafficking in cocaine to ordering the assault and even murder of his critics. One new video, entitled "The Clinton Chronicles," uses spooky music and slow-motion black-and-white footage of marching American soldiers and children waving American flags to make the 1993 inaugural parade look like a Martian takeover of the nation.

"At the time," a narrator intones, "most Americans were not aware of the extent of Clinton's criminal background, nor were they aware of the media blackout which kept this information from the public." The video, produced by an organization called "Citizens for Honest Government," opens with the blatant lie that "all information presented in

© 1994 PETER HANNAN



this program is ... true."

"The Clinton Chronicles" follows in the footsteps of earlier productions, such as Jerry Falwell's "Circle of Fear." Some stories recounted in both, such as the supposed mugging of *New Republic* reporter L.J. Davis in Little Rock and the theft of his notes, simply didn't happen.

The Davis mugging tale, promoted initially on the *Wall Street Journal's* editorial page, has been decisively disproved. The *Wall Street Journal* reported that Davis—while in Little Rock researching various Clinton misdeeds—had been assaulted in his hotel room and had important notes stolen. But statements of witnesses and bar tab records reveal that Davis had been downing martinis in the hotel bar at the time of the supposed assault. Plus, Davis himself says that though he did black out in his hotel room and had a lump on his head when he awoke, he has no idea if he was ever

attacked. He adds that the allegedly stolen notes were still in his notebook when he awoke.

Nevertheless, the Davis tale and the lurid—and now discredited—speculation about the suicide of White House deputy counsel Vincent Foster continue to circulate on talk radio, on computer bulletin boards and in the far-right media. After all, reality is not required in modern attack politics. Repetition is.

The GOP pattern of Clinton abuse was set early. Throughout the 1992 campaign, Republicans felt free to hurl any insult at the Democratic nominee. They routinely labeled him a womanizing draft-dodger who lacked both patriotism and honesty. They built on Clinton's known character flaws and expanded to outrageously salacious allegations, such as endless rumors about women who supposedly committed suicide while carrying Bill Clinton's baby.

But the Bush campaign sought one "silver bullet" in particular: a letter Clinton had allegedly written during the Vietnam War in which he sought to renounce his citizenship. In a dirty trick that would have warmed Nixon's heart, State Department officials illegally searched Clinton's passport file and even pored through his mother's file. At Washington's behest, Britain's Conservative government checked files in London, too.

Though nothing was found, Bush officials still started an FBI investigation, citing possible tampering with Clinton's file. The suggestion was that

Clinton's friends in Washington might have removed the incriminating letter. In early October, the existence of the FBI probe was leaked to *Newsweek*, giving President Bush a fresh opening to impugn Clinton's patriotism and raise the issue of Clinton's student trip to Moscow. The Clinton campaign saw its once-large lead decline dramatically.

Clinton was lucky there were still some Democrats who could play tough. Spencer Oliver, a savvy Democrat who was then chief counsel on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, dispatched his own investigators to check the facts supporting the FBI probe. (Oliver had seen Republican shenanigans before. In 1972, his phone at the Democratic National Committee had been bugged by Nixon's Watergate burglars.) The Democrats discovered that the evidence of alleged "tampering" merely consisted of two staple holes in the corner of Clinton's passport application. Quickly, the

investigation boomeranged into an embarrassing abuse of power by the Bush administration.

In recent years, the aggressive attack politics of Republicans and their right-wing allies has become one of the traits distinguishing them from the Democrats. While Republicans have gotten bolder, Democrats, especially at the national level, have shied away from bare-knuckle conflicts. With the partial exception of Supreme Court nominations, the Democrats have generally acquiesced rather than attacked. For years, leading Democrats—the Hamiltons, Borens, Foleys and Mitchells—have sworn allegiance to the false notion that a forgiving “bipartisanship” was the path toward ending “gridlock.” More often than not, however, “bipartisanship” has translated into helping the Republicans cover up their offenses, including gross violations of the Constitution.

Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-IN), in particular, has bought a full store of Republican cover stories—from the early Iran-contra lies about no North-contra network to the later lies about no Reagan-Bush involvement, to glib dismissals of the October Surprise. In exchange for this appeasement, the Democrats have gained little.

Sometimes, observing Democrats and Republicans maneuver on the same Washington playing field has been like watching a Miller Lite beer commercial that combines two contrasting sports. In this case, the Democrats play croquet and the Republicans play rugby.

But the game is most absurd when it comes to Clinton, who paradoxically holds enormous power as chief executive, yet instills no fear in the power centers of Washington. The stepson of an abusive alcoholic, Clinton appears almost psychologically incapable of confronting powerful adversaries.

After winning the election, Clinton turned his cheek from the Republican slaps and extended a helpful hand. The new president continued Bush’s policy of withholding key Iraq-gate documents from the House Banking Committee, a decision that effectively killed the inquiry into Bush’s pre-war coddling of Saddam Hussein. In a separate move, Clinton’s lawyers joined Bush’s in arguing (unsuccessfully as it turned out) that the Republicans should have the right to purge their White House computer files. Clinton also took no action to declassify documents that Iran-contra special prosecutor Lawrence Walsh needed for the final stage of his investigation.

“We never really thought of pursuing those things,” one senior White House official told me recently. “Those issues just weren’t on our radar scopes.” Clinton had adopted the attitude of his Fleetwood Mac campaign song: “yesterday’s gone, yesterday’s gone.”

The Republicans thanked Clinton for letting them off the hook by hanging him with more humiliation and obstruction. According to Bob Woodward’s recent book, *The Agenda*, Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole met with Clinton the week after his inauguration and bluntly told the new president that the Republicans would be voting en bloc against his entire economic program—the agenda upon

which Clinton had staked his presidency.

But Clinton neither got mad nor got even. He told aides that he “appreciated at least the candor” of Dole’s remarks, Woodward wrote. One can only wonder how Clinton would have reacted if Dole had told him that the Republicans would spend the next year dragging the first lady through the mud, or if Dole had explained how GOP operatives would assist a bizarre sexual harassment suit that aimed at yanking the president’s pants down for a Michael Jackson-style photographic examination of his groin.

Throughout the campaign and the first 18 months of his presidency, Clinton has rarely hit back, except with weak defensive jabs. Certainly, Clinton has shown no appreciation for the more sophisticated techniques of political warfare in which an adversary hits an opponent at one weak spot to soften him up for concessions on another front. By contrast, Republican players such as Rush Limbaugh have boasted that their success in discrediting the Clintons over Whitewater has helped the GOP disrupt the Democratic drive for universal health care.

Ironically, Dole and the Republicans have hobbled Clinton’s presidency with allegations of relatively petty corruption. Yet Dole and many of the same Republicans aggressively protected Reagan and Bush from thorough investigations into far more serious scandals, including waging secret wars that violated both U.S. and international law and collaborating with drug traffickers such as Panama’s Manuel Noriega.

In 1992, while working on my book, *Trick or Treason*, I interviewed Spencer Oliver, the Democratic official who quelled the Bush campaign’s passport smear, about why the Republicans had achieved such success in protecting their broad range of secrets and in discouraging the Democrats from investigating. “What [the Republicans] learned from Watergate was not ‘don’t do it,’ but ‘cover it up more effectively,’” responded Oliver. “They have learned that they have to frustrate congressional oversight and press scrutiny in a way that will avoid another major scandal. They have learned how to withhold documents, create cover stories, throw scapegoats over the side, and prevent the truth from ever coming out.”

But Oliver may have understood too much. The longtime investigator lost his job when House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Dante Fascell (D-FL) retired and was replaced by Lee Hamilton. Though Oliver had helped Clinton out of a jam on the passport file, he got no decent job offer from the White House, either. Instead, he took a position in Denmark as director of the parliamentary assembly for the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Meanwhile, the Nixon legacy lives on, twisting and distorting the nation’s democratic institutions. President Clinton, like many Democrats before him, has shown neither the courage nor the competence to root it out. ◀

Robert Parry, who has covered Washington since 1977, is the author of *Trick or Treason: The October Surprise Mystery*.

THE ECONOMY

Prairie fires

*Central Illinois
is the site
of two of the
most heated
labor disputes
in the country.*

By David Moberg
EAST PEORIA, ILL.

For more than two years, the otherwise placid prairie industrial towns of central Illinois have been a labor-management war zone. At Caterpillar plants in Peoria, Decatur, Pontiac and Aurora (as well as in a Pennsylvania facility), factory disputes have now spilled out into a full-blown strike. And at A.E. Staley in Decatur, corn-processing workers who had earlier fought an effective battle from within their factory have had to endure a year-long lockout.

After the grueling shake-out of the '80s, manufacturing survivors in Midwestern "rust belt" cities typically emerged as more nimble and internationally competitive. Many business strategists—including leading officials in the Clinton administration—hoped that management would now see their experienced workers as valued partners. But

as they have become leaner, many businesses have also become meaner.

At both Caterpillar and Staley, managers are trying to drive down wages and benefits. They also want to regain power to use workers in any way they want, with little union or contractual restraint. At both companies, the anti-labor attacks followed a period during which workers had cooperated in boosting productivity and had accepted drastic job cutbacks. Now workers at Caterpillar and Staley are fighting for the basics: job and income security and a say on matters from shift assignments to workplace safety and health care.

Two years ago, Caterpillar threatened to hire permanent replacements—a move that forced the United Auto Workers (UAW) to end its five-and-a-half-month-old strike. The workers had been demanding a new contract similar to one signed with Cat competitor, John Deere.

(Cat became a *cause célèbre* for labor in its fight to ban permanent replacement of strikers—a position supported by two-thirds of Americans and twice supported by the House. Nonetheless, the Senate last month failed to end a filibuster against the ban by an even wider margin than under the Bush administration.)

After its broken strike ended, an embittered Cat workforce gradually began an "inside campaign" of symbolic resistance to management and "working to rule," doing only what was required. "No contract, no peace," was the union's motto.

It is hard to prove what economic bite the campaign had. Shopfloor organization into Contract Action Teams and worker support seemed to vary from nearly nonexistent to very active. It's clear, however, that the campaign had some economic effect: the UAW obtained management memos complaining of quality and production problems. Also, last year Cat earned three cents profit on each dollar of revenue compared to five cents in the late '80s. That's a possible sign that while Cat could pump out iron to meet growing demand, it was not operating as efficiently as when workers were more motivated.

It is easier to show that management, obsessed with exercising unfettered control in the workplace, was nettled by workers' continued expressions of union loyalty. As the battles wore on, foremen escalated discipline and discharges. Some workers were punished for wearing buttons (such as "Permanently Replace Don Fites," Cat's chairman, "I Am a Union Member in Good Standing" or simply "Clinton-Gore") and for displaying union signs, stickers, balloons or T-shirts. Others got in trouble for chanting or—in the case of one worker whose father, a minister, had given the invocation at a large union rally a few days

before—simply singing a country and western song along with the radio. Still others were disciplined just for trying to file grievances.

As management's crackdown intensified, workers reacted with spontaneous strikes lasting from one to three days. From last September until June there were nine such strikes at different Caterpillar plants.

In response to union charges of company unfair labor practices, the regional office of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) issued 94 complaints, which are preliminary findings that the company had violated labor law. Many of them were for harassing and disciplining workers who expressed union sentiments or actively pursued grievances—from a woman fired for wearing a "Stop Scabs" button to a union official fired while filing a grievance, allegedly in retaliation for his helping the NLRB. Another 70 charges are still being investigated, and hearings are under way on many of the complaints.

In May, the NLRB requested a court injunction against Cat for firing the official, an expression of general counsel Fred Feinstein's new assertiveness. But the court—using unusually tough standards—rejected the injunction, arguing that since workers were still fighting back the firing had not been proven to have had a "chilling effect" on the exercise of union rights.

Tension built throughout the spring. "The harassment was constant, especially if you were a union official," says Gary Romans, a member wearing a red T-shirt that is the shopfloor badge of defiance. "They had done away with full-time committeemen. They tried to degrade our people and make them beg for things that are in our contract," including safety measures.

"We started chanting when we walked out," Romans says, "union slogans, like 'union for all,' 'we want justice.' It just happened, a spontaneous thing. They really came down on us. They said it was disruptive to the workplace and not businesslike, and anybody who chanted would be fired."

People then marched out with gags over their mouths or carrying a big American flag, but supervisors threatened to fire people with gags and transferred people who carried the flag to new assignments.

"A lot of guys said they got involved after the chanting started," reports Lynne Hawkins, a union member's wife who got involved in the union's Families in Solidarity program to better understand what her taciturn husband was experiencing. "They didn't realize there were so many [union supporters]. They said, 'We felt we weren't alone.'"

As Romans observes, many workers were still simply trying to "ride it out" until retirement or were "sick of the struggle." Nonetheless, management's crackdown backfired. Cat worker Steve Hartley says he was a relatively passive union supporter and a model employee who never got



© 1994 JIM WEST/IMPACT VISUALS

in trouble. Then one day, rather than just "get the meat can and go" at the end of the shift, he joined in the group of several hundred workers chanting "Hey, hey, ho, ho, Don Fites has got to go" as they exited. The next day he got a letter threatening to fire him if he engaged in any more protests.

Hartley, a machinist for 22 years at Cat, was outraged. "I said, 'I'm going to walk out with these guys till hell freezes over,'" Hartley recalls. "I needed to show them: 'You've gone too far. You've infringed on my rights as an individual.'"

"Early this year the silent majority finally kicked in," observes John Backes, who organized most of his shift into a Contract Action Team earlier this year even though the committeeman said no one would get involved. "Guys who had never worn a red shirt finally woke up."

As the warfare intensified, rank-and-file pressure built for a strike. A perfunctory negotiating session on June 20 made no progress, and workers began walking out. "The shame of it is we have to fight for the right to fight," says Peoria UAW Local 974 president Jerry Brown. "This fight is about basic union rights—rights of an American."

The union wants 14 discharged workers reinstated, union committeemen restored to their offices, and an end to discrimination against union supporters. It also hopes the company will resume serious contract talks: now the union's best hope seems simply to extend their old 1988 agreement.

Cat claimed that "almost 20 percent" of the 14,000 UAW workers crossed the picket line. While Brown acknowledges that more workers have probably crossed now than in 1992, when about 1,000 breached the pickets, he says the company's figures are wildly inaccurate. He suspects that they are counting anybody still on the payroll, including many on disability or those newly hired but not yet in the union. Some

A Caterpillar striker protests a police pepper gas attack outside Staley's Decatur plant.

early crossovers also have joined the strike.

Anecdotal observations from workers also suggest the company has greatly inflated scab figures as one of several attempts to panic strikers to return to work. Cat has advertised for and hired new employees since the strike, referring to them as "permanent." If any charges of management's unfair labor practices are upheld, strikers, under law, could not be permanently replaced—but resolving the issue could drag on for years.

Though the UAW represents less than half of Cat's worldwide workforce, the union has an edge now, because demand is high and the company had a backlog of orders even while working employees overtime. "They couldn't keep up with us in there," Brown says. "They can't catch up with us out."

In Decatur, union leaders at Staley claim that the workforce of transferred managers, subcontractors and strike-breakers has been unable to maintain either the previous quantity or quality of production during the year-long lock-out. The company, a subsidiary of the British Tate & Lyle conglomerate, locked workers out after a "work to rule" campaign had cut production by roughly 30 percent. Though no charges were ever made against individual workers, the company claimed sabotage. The union, a local of the Paperworkers, maintains that Staley has acted illegally by effectively permanently replacing members after locking them out.

Having lost their work-to-rule weapon, the 760 locked-out workers have tried to bring other companies with ties to Staley—such as State Farm Insurance and Archer Daniels Midland—into the dispute. More promising, they've attempted to pressure Staley customers such as Smucker's, Pepsi, Brach's Candy and Miller Brewing to stop using Staley corn syrup. So far, only a few small customers have canceled orders, but Miller—which portrays itself as an all-union beer—is the focus of a new campaign. The Staley local, however, avoids calling for a boycott of Miller, in deference to Machinist and UAW unions representing Miller workers.

Meanwhile, workers have taken to the road to spread word of their lockout and have built coalitions of unions, churches and other groups. They've organized peaceful civil disobedience, blocking company gates and marching

through their bosses' residential neighborhoods—both resulting in arrests. On June 25, a march and protest (which police say drew 1,500 people, while the union claims 4,000) ended in an unprovoked police pepper gas attack on several dozen demonstrators on the front lines, including those sitting with their backs to the police.

At a city council meeting following the demonstration, local union militant Mike Griffin denounced the action, saying the police have "got to stop acting like the bosses' police." "This town is no longer the 'Pride of the Prairie' but 'Scab City,'" he said. "There's justice in town for the wealthy, and then there's justice for the working class and the poor."

(Indeed, class tensions are on the rise in Decatur, a city of 84,000 people. In addition to the Cat and Staley disputes, 1,250 workers at a big Firestone plant just walked off the job.)

Like many of the Caterpillar strikers, the locked-out Staley workers have been transformed—gaining what Griffin calls new energy, or, as local president Dave Watts puts it, a sense of the importance of family and faith. Despite the hard times, the large and loyal union core sees their battle as going far beyond the terms of a contract. "Our fight is not just for us," Watts says. "It's for our kids and future generations, and how they're going to be treated. I'd hoped for a hell of a lot more with a Democrat leading the country. If they have anything for workers, they better show it soon."

Cat worker Mike Steagall, 46, had once been a leader in a company employee-involvement program. Now he sees those efforts as simply a device to steal workers' "black book" informal knowledge of production and a tool to break the union. "I think it was a big mistake," he says. If participating was a mistake for workers and the union, violating workers' trust and destroying that cooperation may prove to be Fites' biggest error.

But two years of struggle have hardened the resolve of many Cat workers and broadened their perspective. "This is bigger than just Cat," says Mike Legal, coordinator of the local's own video record of the dispute. "If we don't put an end to this drift of the country to drive wages down, there's no future for my three boys. There will be an upper class and a lower class, and I know where they will be." ▲

Become an In THESE TIMES Sustainer

Our sustainers actively support *In These Times* by donating on a monthly or quarterly basis. Plus, all new sustainers receive two free six-month gift subscriptions! Sustainers who pledge a minimum of \$10 per month or \$25 per quarter also receive their *In These Times* subscription free of charge. For information contact:

**Claudia Morris, In These Times,
2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647
312-772-0100, ext. 224**

Invite Salim Muwakkil into your classroom.

Or Salim Muwakkil. Or Pat Aufderheide. Or Joel Bleifuss. You've come to rely on their viewpoints on politics, foreign affairs and culture in *In These Times*. Now you can offer their analysis of world events to your students. If you are a professor of political science, communications, sociology, history or related subjects, your students can receive *In These Times* for a fraction of the usual rate.

For information call (312)772-0100, ext. 239.

B L A C K M E D I A

Beyond the pale

***Frustrated
with
mainstream
media outlets,
African-
American
journalists are
returning to a
revitalized
black press.***

By Salim Muwakkil

G

George Curry is a pioneer in a reverse migration that has been picking up speed in recent years. As the former New York bureau chief for the *Chicago Tribune*, Curry left one of journalism's most privileged perches to become editor-in-chief of *Emerge* magazine, a publication that bills itself as "Black America's News-magazine."

"This is one of the most satisfying things I've ever done," Curry says. "I've learned a lot from more than two decades in the mainstream media, and it really feels good to be able to give some of that back to my own community."

Curry's current satisfaction contrasts starkly with the sense of frustration he often felt while writing for the *Tribune*. "The longer you're in mainstream media, the more frustrated

you become," he says. "You know that you're really writing for a white audience and that you can't really get to the essence of the issue because of that."

He argues that many blacks in the mainstream media share these feelings. "There are so many gifted African-American journalists out here and virtually everyone I know working at white publications is totally frustrated," Curry says. That frustration has many sources, among them: superficial reporting, the perpetuating of negative stereotypes of African-Americans, the "suburbanization" of the editorial sensibility and the lack of promotion opportunities.

Many of *Emerge's* articles are contributed by black writers working in mainstream venues. "They are more than happy to write for us," Curry notes. "We provide them with an outlet and an opportunity to say the things that many of their white editors think are irrelevant to the suburban readership they covet."

That same sense of frustration compelled Hermene Hartman to create *N'DIGO*, a black-oriented "magapaper" that has become a major voice within Chicago's

black community during the five years of its existence. Hartman formerly worked in the field of public relations, both in her own firm and as vice chancellor of community affairs at Chicago's City Colleges.

"As a public relations person, I was very sensitive to the issues of media coverage and image, and I was constantly frustrated with the lack of fair media coverage of many black politicians and other public figures," Hartman recalls. "And where were the black people I knew and interacted with every day? I didn't see them in the media. Where was my life?"

Convinced that other African-Americans shared her discontent with the narrow range of media coverage, Hartman decided to create a publication that would showcase the variety of the African-American community. "I had some energy, I knew good writers who were not writing anywhere, I knew that one-half of Chicago was of a darker hue and that all of them didn't live in public housing," she says. "I knew there was a void, so I made it a niche."

Hartman and Curry have reversed direction on the traditional career track, which saw African-American journalists moving from black-oriented publications to positions with mainstream publications. As trailblazers, of sorts, they exemplify a new spirit of self-reliance that is finding expression throughout the black community. What's more, their common complaint about the mainstream media's distorted portrayals of African-Americans illustrates the historical differences in the development of black and white journalism.

In the early 19th century, African-Americans turned to

journalism as a tool of liberation from slavery. The first black newspaper, *Freedom's Journal*, was founded in 1827 specifically to counteract the pro-slavery views of the white media.

Black journalists historically have served as propagandists for anti-slavery and civil rights movements—constructing a narrative of freedom and racial equality—rather than as objective chroniclers of events. Publications like the *Chicago Defender* and the *Philadelphia Tribune* became more than just newspapers; they became repositories of black America's hopes and dreams.

However, most of those publications were marginal, resource-poor enterprises that offered journalists a sense of mission, but little hope for secure employment or career advancement. When mainstream media outlets began hiring black journalists in the late '60s, they offered secure employment but little sense of mission. *Emerge* and *N'DIGO* offer both. What's more, they are determined to bring a new level of professionalism to the genre of black journalism.

One of the more high-stakes attempts to fill the void of quality black publications is James T.A. Babington-Johnson's *U.S.A. Thisweek*. Babington-Johnson formed a limited partnership of 25 investors to fund a new national newsweekly that will go head to head with *Time*, *Newsweek* and *U.S. News & World Report*. The magazine will cover international and domestic events from an African-American perspective and is scheduled for an August debut. "It won't be strictly about black issues," explains Babington-Johnson. "Our aim is to examine the long-term impact of concerns and problems that can affect everyone, not just particular segments of society, and not just the mainstream audience as imagined by the more conventional or myopic news media."

Like *Emerge*'s Curry, Babington-Johnson recruited many black journalists who formerly were working with mainstream publications. And according to reports from people familiar with his efforts at *U.S.A. Thisweek*, the publication

was overwhelmed with résumés. Discontent among African-American

in mainstream journalism is widespread—and not isolated to the print media. Television punditry is a pastime indulged in primarily by white males and a select few females. Gwen Ifill of the *New York Times*, Julia Johnson of *Time Magazine* and Michele McQueen, formerly of the *Wall Street Journal*, are the three black women currently making the punditry circuit, while the *Chicago Tribune*'s Clarence Page and Juan Williams of the *Washington Post* are the two most prominent black men on the TV talk circuit.

Page, a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist, is also a panelist on *Lead Story*, a news analysis program on cable television's Black Entertainment Television that features a panel of African-American pundits discussing domestic and inter-



N'DIGO's Hermene Hartmann

national events. Most of *Lead Story's* panelists are print journalists employed by mainstream publications.

"I do a lot of appearances on *The McLaughlin Group*, the *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour* and as an analyst on WGN-TV in Chicago, so I get the chance to mouth off a lot," Page explains. "But I find it to be both refreshing and very satisfying to discuss those same issues with black folks. There's a dimension of empathy that's lacking in those other venues and we begin our discussions at a different level. The mainstream tends to look at black people uniformly as problem people. At *Lead Story* we know that African-Americans are diverse people with problems."

That perspective was crucial to the vision of Delmarie Cobb, a Chicago-based journalist who created a television newsmagazine that focused on national and international issues from an African-American perspective. Entitled *Street Life*, two installments of the show aired on 50 major PBS markets in late 1991 and early 1992 to almost universal acclaim. A *Chicago Tribune* media critic said the show "is a TV rarity on two counts. Not only is it the only show I can think of that is anchored by two blacks, but it also is very good. It is solidly reported, interesting and handsomely produced."

The program died for lack of financial support, and although Cobb is discouraged by that development, she hasn't slowed down. The multimedia production company she built, DELECO Communications, is busy creating other products. "Black people have had access to the education

and skills of the mainstream," Cobb says. "And we are producing such quality products that it's only a matter of time before you begin seeing a rash of high-quality, black-owned productions and publications."

Although there has been some improvement in recent years, black journalists still are woefully underrepresented in the mainstream media. Those African-Americans who have managed to find jobs in the major media no doubt appreciate the increases in income and status that such employment affords. But increasingly they are concluding that the psychic costs they pay for that mainstream allegiance are not worth the benefits.

When columnist Lu Palmer quit the now defunct *Chicago Daily News* in 1973 because of what he charged was racist treatment, he was one of two or three black columnists working in mainstream venues nationwide. Palmer's action shocked many observers who thought he should be eternally grateful for his unique position. Others blamed him for exchanging a position of real influence for a prideful, but powerless, place in the social margins.

Within three months, Palmer was out with *Black Xpress*, a publication determined to validate the perceptions and perspective of African-Americans. Although he rejected all white advertisers, *Black Xpress* lasted 18 months. Palmer's gesture seemed quixotic at the time, and his rejection of white advertising was needlessly defiant, but many African-Americans who followed him into the mainstream are beginning to see his point. ◀

The Assassination of the Black

Male Image by Earl Ofari Hutchinson, Ph.D.

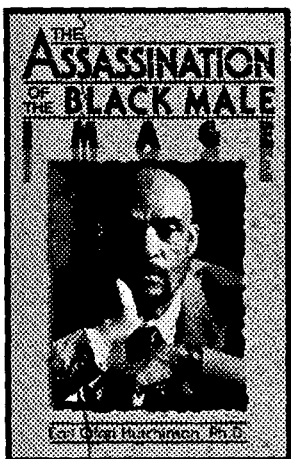
"Hutchinson offers an angry rebuttal to the media images of black men . . . but his basic argument is irrefutable."

Charles Solomon, *LA Times*

"The Assassination is shocking in its honesty. It is real in its interpretation of history, of slavery, of the brutal reality facing black people in a white world."

Joe Williams III, *LA Watts Times*

"This collection of essays focuses on the images of African-American men in the mass media. Hutchinson argues, Americans have historically portrayed the black male as the 'universal bogeyman.'" David Cochran, *Columbia Missourian*



ORDER YOUR COPY NOW! Send a check or money order for **\$9.96** plus shipping **\$1.50** to:
**Middle Passage Press • 5517 Secrest Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90043 • (800) 959-9323**

THE PROPHET'S CHILDREN

Travels on the American Left

Tim Wohlforth

"A distinctive contribution to the literature of the American left's recent past."

— Scott McLemee, *In These Times*

Wohlforth's fascinating memoir is both a history of a left political trend, and a story of the watchers who spied on Wohlforth throughout his thirty year involvement with the American and international Trotskyist movement. From 1953 until '73 the FBI compiled over 8000 pages of surveillance files — many quoted in the book.

0-391-03802-8

paper

\$18.50

HIM

Historical Memories

A new series published by Humanities Press International

Available in bookstores or from Humanities Press
165 First Avenue, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716
TEL 908 872 1441 FAX 908 872 0717

A S I A

Covering death with dishonor

W

ith Kim Il Sung's passing, the Korean crisis of recent years has entered its most dangerous phase. This is not because of the much-heralded "instability" that CIA-connected savants predict whenever any Communist titan dies—though a period of unsettled politics is possible in Pyongyang.

The U.S. press reaches a new low in its reporting on the passing of North Korea's Kim Il Sung.

By Bruce Cumings

It is not because the designated successor, Kim Jong Il, is crazy where his father was wily; or that he is irrational and unpredictable where his father was shrewd—all the epithets now flying toward the son were thrown at his father for the first three decades of his rule. Nor is it because the Korean masses who labored under Kim's rule will now rebel and overthrow his hated regime. The sparse evidence we have from Pyongyang since Kim's death suggests something like a national wake and maybe a national nervous breakdown, but hardly the hatred that spewed forth when, for example, Nicolae

Ceausescu bit the dust.

No, the danger accompanying Kim's death comes from sources that the mainstream media does not mention: from powerful forces in the United States who yearn for a confrontation with another "renegade state"; and they will be joined, directly or indirectly, by hard-liners in South Korea who have waited years for Kim's death, and who will not rest until all Kim's relatives and close associates are in the grave. Of course, there are troubling signs within North Korea as well. Pyongyang will be paralyzed for a time, and deeply cautious about any perceived infringement upon its sovereignty and security. Ultimately, however, we face grave danger because no two peoples in the world misunderstand each other as profoundly as Americans and Koreans.

The incomprehension extends across the political spectrum in the United States, including people like Sen. John McCain (R-AZ), who has publicly called for the "despicable" Pyongyang regime to be overthrown, and who said on ABC television three days after Kim's death that if the North Koreans dare to start anything we should "exterminate" them. The incomprehension continues through "centrist" magazines like *Newsweek*, whose July 18 cover warned that we now will have to deal with a "headless beast" in Pyongyang. And it ends up on the American left, which never had any use for Kim's revolution and has apparently had next to no interest in the recurring crisis over North Korea's nuclear activity—if one can judge by the paucity of articles on the subject in the "left" press.

Except for the too-silent left publications, it is almost commonplace now for U.S. pundits to indulge in a dehumanized, racist discourse about North Korea that makes me think there would be almost no popular resistance to American involvement in another Korean war. I always try to remain conscious of what I like to call the fallacy of insufficient cynicism, but never would I have anticipated the debased racist imagery or the warped, tabloid-style "debate" that is now routine in discussions of our problems with Pyongyang.

When Pyongyang's citizens poured into the streets to publicly mourn Kim's death, the airwaves in the United States were filled with commentators speaking about "mass hysteria" and "uncontrollable weeping"—clearly the natives were running amok. Yet it is commonplace in Korea, both North and South, for relatives to wail and beat the ground for hours or days after the passing of a loved one. It is an old and admirable ritual, a wonderful catharsis for the living. Although the intensity of the mourning for Kim strained Korean norms, as Kim's regime always did, it was nothing unexpected or irrational within the Korean context.

In its distorted coverage of North Korea, the American

press has managed to evoke the Fu Manchu orientalism of the pre-war period, the commie-hating of the Cold War and '90s tropes about "new Saddams" and "rogue dictators." Disturbingly, this degraded imagery is not limited to North Korea. Rather, the American media's fractured perspective on Pyongyang is consistent with our society's skewed vision of all Asian cultures.

In 1989, editors at the *New York Times* eagerly embraced the feverish rhetoric of Karel van Wolferen's *Enigma of Japanese Power*. The book's twisted descriptions of Japan seem eerily interchangeable with current press accounts of North Korea. Japan, according to van Wolferen, is a mysterious Asian nation, which "single-mindedly pursu[es] some obscure aim of its own." Guided by an opaque "System," the country's elite "suppresses individualism," and defies Western traditions of logic going "all the way back to the Greeks." The "crucial factor" in the working of this system is "the near absence of any idea that there can be truth, rules, principles or morals that always apply, no matter what the circumstances."

Masao Miyoshi, a professor of English at the University of California-San Diego, is one of our best analysts of Western attitudes toward Japan and East Asia. In his recent book, *Off Center*, he sadly observes "how little anti-racist efforts have accomplished in the United States in all these years since the 1960s," when Vietnam War protesters tried to humanize that era's Asian "enemies." But just as the American media rarely explored the roots of Ho Chi Minh's Vietnamese revolution, the press has always seemed intent on ignoring the history that led to Korea's division and subsequent civil war.

From the North Korean perspective, their struggle against the United States was merely a continuation of the battle against imperialist powers that had attempted to dominate the Korean peninsula. For years, Kim fought a ruthless Japanese imperialism that sought to stamp out every trace of Korean nationhood. Kim began fighting the Japanese in 1932 when he was just 20. He came to power in the North in 1946, supported by the Soviets but with little love lost between him and the Russians. There were many other rivals for power in the North, but none had Kim's nationalist credentials.

Kim confronted an America that had casually divided Korea, a nation with a well-recognized integrity stretching back to antiquity. In the South, the United States set up a regime full of Korean collaborators with Japan. When Kim took the bull by the horns in 1950 and committed the irredeemable sin of invading his own homeland, the United States intervened with 16 other nations. China backed North Korea against this American coalition, and from that time onward Kim maneuvered between Moscow and Beijing to carve out an independent, if isolated, position for his country. Later on, the Soviet Union sought to stifle Korean independence and enroll its economy in an international division of labor like the satellites in Eastern Europe. Even Kim's alliance with China was hardly ideal. Though China

has been more loyal to Pyongyang than any other country, it has exercised benign neglect at best and a repulsive big-power chauvinism at worst.

Kim's revolution was also isolated from the Western left. In a predictable pattern, some Western leftists went through a period of interest and admiration for the Kim regime, which was followed by an equally predictable disillusionment. They projected their own hopes onto a vast unknown entity, only to turn away when they learned a little bit, for example, about Kim's personality cult, or the unique but often repellent way that Kim melded Leninist and Confucian political practice. This pattern of lost illusions was perfectly understandable since few countries are harder to get to know than North Korea. But you wonder who those leftists expected to find in such an abused and beleaguered country—Antonio Gramsci or Rosa Luxemburg?

The first Western leftist to report extensively on North Korea was Anna Lousie Strong, a journalist who published a glowing account of North Korea's reforms in 1947. But Strong privately wrote to a friend that the North Korean people were accustomed to "slave-teaching" and that they believed "all government comes from above."

The American left, feeling no real attachment to Pyongyang, has expended little energy to expose the nature of the regime in Seoul. A vicious military dictatorship ruled South Korea for 30 years, yet it has typically been portrayed in the American media as an innocent party to Korea's civil conflict. Since its 1992 elections our media has placed a halo over the head of South Korea's rulers. One has to scratch around to learn that the South's infamous National Security Law is still in effect—a law that calls North Korea an "anti-state organization," and places a jail sentence on anyone caught praising it.

Now, North Korea's leader of nearly 50 years is dead, and various interests will come forward hoping to destabilize the regime: South Korean hotheads, remnant North Korean exiles in Russia, CIA irregulars who will fish in troubled waters, military-industrial complex lobbyists who see the North Korean threat as a meal ticket to new war plans and weapons systems, and a Japanese right wing that still has profound racial contempt for Koreans.

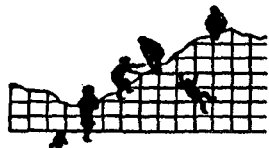
Kim's death could hardly have come at a worse time. He had just met his first American president, if an emeritus one, and he was about to meet his first South Korean president. Suddenly, there seemed to be hope that the longstanding Korean division could be healed.

Bill Clinton has been a quick study on the Korean problem, and now he is probably better informed than any recent president about the situation in Korea. In coming months, however, he will be hard-pressed to pull a policy out of the Korean thicket that can bring our two peoples together and keep them from hurtling down the path toward another war.

◀
Bruce Cummings, author of the two-volume history *The Origins of the Korean War*, teaches international history and politics at Northwestern University.

15 YEARS of Popular Economics

Where Do We
Go From Here?
Alternatives and Strategies



Fifteenth Anniversary
Conference

Center for
Popular Economics

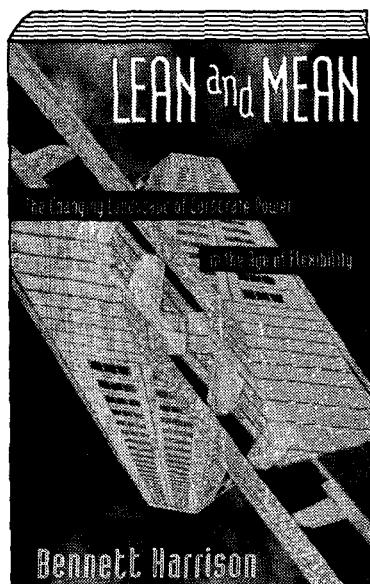
August 5-7, 1994
Smith College
Northampton, MA

For More Information:

C.P.E. Box 785
Amherst, MA 01004
413-545-0743

"The Most Important Business Book of the 1990s."

—Clyde Prestowitz, Jr., President,
Economic Strategy Institute



"A provocative and powerful argument for a new industrial reality with the potential to reshape economic policy, business strategy, workplaces, job prospects—and the lives of millions of American workers."

—Rosabeth Moss Kanter, author of
When Giants Learn to Dance

"A dazzling piece of work."

—Robert Kuttner, columnist,
Business Week

At bookstores or call 800-331-3761

BasicBooks
A Division of HarperCollins Publishers
Also available from HarperCollins Canada Ltd

EVERY TIME YOU USE AN *In THESE TIMES* MASTERCARD CARD, ITT RECEIVES 15¢

Put your credit card to work for *In THESE TIMES* at no additional cost to you. The magazine receives \$1.50 when you sign up and 15¢ for every charge you make, no matter what the amount of the charge. So put your credit card to good use. Sign up today.

Enjoy the advantages of the *In THESE TIMES* Gold MasterCard without risk... It is issued absolutely free of an annual fee for one full year.¹ Other features include a line of credit up to \$50,000, immediate cash availability and Premium Buyer's Protection.

Extensive travel benefits and services provided at no extra cost, include*:

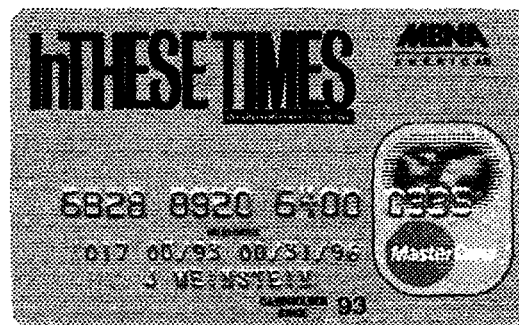
- Up to \$1,000,000 Common Carrier Travel Accident Insurance
- Supplemental Auto Rental Collision/Loss Damage Insurance
- Up to \$3,000 Supplemental Lost Luggage Protection
- Emergency Cash & Airline Tickets

MBNA America® is one of the world's leading issuers of credit cards. Committed to servicing our members' needs, MBNA America® offers cardholders 24-hour-year-round Customer Satisfaction, one hour processing for credit line increase requests, a lost card registration service and an emergency replacement card service.

¹17.9% Annual Percentage Rate. \$40 Annual Fee for the Gold MasterCard and \$20 for the Silver MasterCard waived the first year. Transaction Fee For Bank and ATM Cash Advances: 2% of each Cash Advance (\$2 Minimum, \$25 Maximum); Transaction Fee For Premium Access Checks® and Preferred Access Checks® Cash Advances: 1% of each Cash Advance (\$2 Minimum, \$10 Maximum). Late Payment Fee: \$15. Over-The-Credit-Limit-Fee: \$15.

*Certain restrictions apply to these benefits. The summary of credit card benefits accompanying the credit card Premium Access Checks® and Preferred Access Checks® describes coverage terms, conditions and limitations.

MBNA America® and Premium Access Checks® are federally registered Service Marks of MBNA America Bank, N.A. The account is issued and administered by MBNA America Bank, N.A. MasterCard® is a federally registered Service Mark of MasterCard International, Inc., used pursuant to license. The information about the cost of the card described above is accurate as of 2/93, to find out what may have changed call 1-800-847-7378 ext. 5000. © 1993 MBNA America Bank, N.A.



CALL NOW TO APPLY!

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

1-800-847-7378 ext. 5000

Be sure to use this priority code when calling: KZPU.

I N T H E A R T S

Vidiot savant

**Forrest Gump
uses hi-tech
tricks to
explore a
simpleton's
rise to fame
and fortune.**

By Pat Dowell

Forrest Gump is about America's deep yearning for the normal—a nervous preoccupation that, in this fable, is cloaked with the glories of celebrity. That may sound like a paradox, but conformity and celebrity—disappearing into the crowd and standing above it—are just two sides of the same social coin. America has a hard time deciding whether it likes heads or tails.

The title character is the perfect solution to this iconographic dilemma. Born in post-World War II Alabama with an IQ of 75, young Forrest endures heavy legbraces to correct his curved spine and suffers the taunts of his schoolmates because he's "different." His mama (Sally Field) reassures him that he's special, that everyone is special, and ergo, that he's just like everybody else.

Grown-up Forrest, sitting on a bus-stop bench in Savannah, tells his story to anyone who happens by, rolling it out in a halting, chewy drawl that must have been Tom Hanks' homework for six months at least. Hanks, as usual, sort of grows on you. His determination to play this character without even a hint of a wink is as winsomely dogged as Forrest himself, whose ability to obey eventually brings him fame and fortune.

How he gets there is the movie's joke, but it's a very soft-edged joke. Unlike another fool's fable, Hal Ashby's *Being There*, *Forrest Gump* is not a satiric sendup of the powers that be.

Yet like Chauncey Gardiner—*Being There*'s simple man who is mistaken for a shrewd power broker—Forrest doesn't try to get ahead, he just tries to get along. The school bullies chase him out of his braces and onto a football field, where his unexpectedly fleet feet get him signed up by a scout from the University of Alabama. His single-mindedness at first accounts for his success—recruited to the Army, he is the darling of his drill

sergeant because he never goes his own way. In Vietnam, he rescues a platoon man by man because he won't stop until he gets his black buddy out from under enemy fire.

But eventually divine intervention comes into play on Forrest's side, because in this day and age that's what it takes to save America, as movies such as *Field of Dreams* have illustrated. Forrest goes into the shrimping business to fulfill a promise to his dead buddy, but fails to net any shrimp until a hurricane sinks his competitors' boats. After that, he becomes a member of the Fortune 500 and a philanthropist to boot.

Forrest has already played a pivotal if unnoticed role in history by this time. He teaches Elvis how to be swivel-hipped when the unknown young singer rooms in the Gump boarding house. He gets to meet Presidents Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon, thanks to clever special effects that insert Hanks into composite television footage, including a *Dick Cavett Show* appearance with John Lennon. It's a cinematic trick Woody Allen used in *Zelig*—but *Forrest Gump* director Robert Zemeckis has gone Allen one better on the technical (if not the intellectual) level. Using vocal impersonators and



Forrest Gump
Directed by Robert Zemeckis

PHOTOS © PHIL CARUSO/PARAMOUNT PICTURES



computer alteration of the image, Zemeckis' film makes it appear that Forrest and the famous are having a chat. News from nowhere, here at last!

Each of these encounters with history is annotated by Forrest narrating with an update on the destiny of the men he's met—Elvis dead, JFK murdered, RFK murdered, George Wallace shot, John Lennon murdered. He even gets to do his bit for Watergate, proving yet again and in a heretofore unknown and hilarious way that Nixon was his own worst enemy.

Eventually this litany of lamentations and assassinations becomes the context for all that Forrest does. Death and destruction are the backdrop to Forrest's life, for the dire history he survives is a picaresque version of *America—What Went Wrong*. It is symbolized on the personal level by the downward trend of Forrest's doomed love, Jenny (Robin Wright).

Like Forrest, Jenny starts with problems, suffering sexual abuse at the hands of her drunken father. But her life is no series of hard-won triumphs, as is Forrest's. It's a parade of evil men, glimpsed—in a succession of visually rhyming scenes—as a bruised Jenny leaves each one in turn. Her clothes and hairstyles change, denoting the passage of time, but the exit through a back door in the middle of the night is always the same. Ultimately she and Forrest get together and she has a little Forrest. But she's also got "this virus, they don't know what it is." We do.

Forrest, of course, is concerned about his own destiny,

which his mother tells him (on her deathbed, in morbid consistency with Forrest's other encounters) he must find for himself. But that stubborn desire to be just like everybody else is always with him, right up to the moment when he discovers he has a son. He backs up in horror and wonder, finally spitting out the question to Jenny, "But is he—smart?"

That question comes as a something of a shock, considering how far Forrest has come by not worrying about being "normal." Director Zemeckis, in league with Hanks, has made Forrest's story a zippy piece of entertainment, full of dazzlingly concise episodes, with Forrest vaulting unawares through painfully funny bits of history, his hands full with just staying alive.

But Forrest is more than just a guy; he's an American Everyman. *Forrest Gump* mines the same territory as *Rain Man* and *Field of Dreams*. Both those films spoke to that unhinged feeling in the middle class by offering nostalgic renderings of the power that white men—any white men, whatever their IQs—can wield. Forrest's fable is more palatable than *Rain Man*, with its parlor-trick performance by Dustin Hoffman. And it is less fatuous than *Field of Dreams*, which desperately sought a second chance for American men in a fantasy visitation from that great locker room in the sky.

In fact, *Forrest Gump* is pretty damn entertaining for a movie that celebrates the normopath in us. And like so many American entertainments, it only hurts when you start to think about it.

TELEVISION

This year's model

“**T**here are only seven original plots,” Aaron Spelling once explained. “You try to do them with style and moderation.” And if you’re Spelling—the most prolific and commercially successful television producer in history, the auteur responsible for *The Mod Squad*, *Charlie’s Angels*, *Starsky and Hutch* and *Dynasty*—you boil those seven original plots down still further, to extract from them the philosopher’s stone of network broadcasting: a formula to turn trash into gold. Typically, Spelling’s programs have been populated with attractive people who (1) are affluent, (2) have exciting jobs, and/or (3) live out their fantasies. In short, he has made a career of showing people what they want, but haven’t got.

Aaron Spelling, the king of unreality programming, turns his sights on the Hobbesian world of high fashion.

By Scott McLemee

Of course, not every experiment has been a success. The alchemy worked with *The Love Boat*, *Fanta-*

sy Island and *Hart to Hart*. But a finicky public withheld its esteem from *San Pedro Beach Burns*. And nurses were outraged at *Nightingales*—a show that (as industry legend has it) Spelling sold to a network executive in a parking lot with this one-line description: “Student nurses in Dallas in the summer and the air conditioners aren’t working, so they sweat a lot.”

For a brief period in the early ’90s, Spelling’s programs disappeared from the prime-time schedule. His old productions thrived in syndication, but Spelling’s imaginary universe was crowded out of the evening network broadcasts by so-called “reality programming.” In interviews, he always refers to these actorless, unscripted programs with distaste. With admirable candor, Spelling has labeled his own creations “cotton candy for the mind.” The man is no snob; but the endless flow of tabloid “news” programs and cops-with-videocams shows offends him.

So there are layers of irony to his recent comeback. When Spelling returned to prime time—first with *Beverly Hills, 90210*, then shortly after that with *Melrose Place*—it was on Fox, the network most responsible for “reality” programming. No one would confuse *90210* or *Melrose* with naturalistic grit: they are prime-time fantasies of togetherness among the young and beautiful. Yet the extraordinary popularity of these programs has had something to do with objective social processes. The 71-year-old Spelling admits he is “very intrigued” with the younger generation, and the Lollapalooza-niks have returned his fascination. But few, if any, would recognize the name of the *eminence gris* behind these series.

It is tempting to regard *Models Inc.*—the latest installment of Spelling’s youth chronicles—as merely another variation on a successful theme. Once again, we have a set of uniformly good-looking young people in Southern California, their lives interlocked, romantically and otherwise, in a sort of mini-community. The high school students in *Beverly Hills* all look like models (indeed, models in their late 20s). So, for that matter, do the denizens of *Melrose Place*. And Spelling himself acknowledges the resemblance of *Models Inc.* to the other shows in his Wednesday-night dynasty: “I’m changing the title,” he told an interviewer. “How much more creative do you want me to be?” But *Beverly Hills* and *Melrose Place* seem virtually to be PBS documentaries by contrast with *Models Inc.*—a fantastic (as in “dreamlike”) account of life in the fashion industry. In its first episodes, the virginal, corn-fed Sarah joins an agency presided over by the motherly (but managerial) Hillary Michaels. As perhaps befits a woman named Hillary in this day and age, Ms. Michaels is a post-feminist entrepreneur. She defines her

essence neatly enough in the first episode: "You hear that I'm tough, that I built Models Inc. from scratch, that I'm the kind of woman who gets what she wants, and absolutely *hates* to lose." Her other employees/surrogate daughters include Julie (scheming), Linda (low self-esteem), Carrie (not getting any younger) and Terri (Carrie's little sister, poised for super-model status).

The plot twist of the debut episode was kept tightly under wraps, lest reporters spoil it for everyone. But now the truth may be told: During a party in her honor, Terri falls from a very high floor of the building. Her death effectively creates a vacuum within the agency, into which Sarah (the naïf) is rapidly drawn. It also generates a mystery: was she murdered? Well, no. But she *did* scuffle with her sister just before plunging, accidentally, to the street below. This key fact is revealed in the second episode, along with information regarding an illegitimate baby and much else besides.

It is, in short, a soap opera—which we might define here as a genre in which the creation and distribution of secrets form the characters' main pre-occupation. Modeling itself counts for little in the narrative. The characters might be stewardesses—or sweaty nursing students—for all the difference it makes. Yet *Models Inc.* has an almost mathematical elegance: because it is set in the world of fashion modeling, the show reveals a maximum quantity of bare skin with the minimum convolution of the story-line. The plot does not merely permit young women to disrobe every 15 minutes; it practically demands that they do so.

Now (I should hasten to add) Aaron Spelling is, by his own account, a kind of feminist. He has insisted over the years that *Charlie's Angels* was a reflection of the women's movement (which perhaps explains why they wore those particular halter tops). Presumably his good intentions explain a conspicuous difference between the genders in the new program. With *Models Inc.*, the women all bear some kind of burden, some painful memory or history of abuse—all of them but innocent Sarah, who is due to get hers presently. By contrast, the men are all either dull or rat-bastards.

Worst of all is Eric, boyfriend of Linda (low self-esteem)—a slacker Svengali with a wolf tattoo on his shoul-

der, whose chief activities are playing guitar and saying things like, "Damn it, Linda, you can't afford to blow any opportunity. I need the cash for my demo." And in one memorable scene of twisted intimacy, he purrs: "Who looks after you, baby? Who knows you better than anyone? Who would you die for?" (With this, I suspect, the script writers are trying a bit of foreshadowing.)

In a way, *Models Inc.* is the antithesis of Spelling's other post-boomer dramas. The appeal of *Beverly Hills, 90210* and *Melrose Place* doubtless comes from the projection, in each, of a little utopia: the close-knit world of the high school clique or the cozy apartment complex. Things look altogether nastier within *Models Inc.* (even though the program is a direct spin-off of *Melrose*). The modeling agency seems to be a war of all against all. People are vain or parasitic; their careers, a zero-sum game which somebody has to lose.

Perhaps that nastiness is as close to realism as Spelling is willing to let the program get. Melodrama may be the closest approximation to the lived experiences of the models themselves.

No doubt, an earnest effort to portray the world of modeling would be the most subversive program in the history of television. It would reveal how the whole ideology of glamour is produced and circulated within

the advertising market; how women are (quite literally) "fashioned" into images that are then attached to commodities.

But then, would the Coca-Cola Corp. have tied in its \$350 million summer advertising campaign with any series that pushed the envelope too far? The fate of the women in *Models Inc.* is the fate of the show itself: to bring the consumer to the consumer goods. Thanks to that fact, no program on prime-time network television will ever portray the guys who really manipulate the models—guys who could probably teach Eric a thing or two.

Scott McLemee writes regularly on culture and politics for *In These Times*.



I N P R I N T

Art and anger

By Ilan Stavans

Alberto Manguel, the editor and translator, once divided writers into two groups: those who perceive a single corner of the world as their entire universe, and those who look everywhere in the universe for a place called home. Judith Ortiz Cofer and Cherríe Moraga, new American female voices with a Hispanic ancestry, exemplify the opposition between the particularists and the universalists—the one introspective and self-possessed; the other outspoken, her writing meant to unsettle.

Ortiz Cofer, born in 1952 in Hormigueros, Puerto Rico, writes delicate, carefully shaped poetry and prose. She believes that literature doesn't need to come to us as a shock. Instead, it should deliver its recreation of what Gershom Scholem once called "a plastic moment," an instant in life in which a single insight might provoke a whole re-evaluation of our worldview.

She assumes her writing life fully, and without apology. In her essay "5:00 A.M.: Writing as Ritual," Ortiz Cofer says: "Since that first morning in 1978 when I rose in the dark to find myself in a room of my own—with two hours belonging only to me ahead of me, two prime hours when my mind was still filtering my dreams—I have not made or accepted too many excuses for not writing. This apparently ordinary choice, to get up early and to work every day, forced me to come to terms with the discipline of art." An unequivocal particularist, as well as a transcendentalist in the 19th-century sense of the term, she may well be the most important Hispanic writer in English today, the one who will happily leave behind ethnic writing to insert herself and her successors in a truly universal literature, one that is neither apologetic nor falsely "representative." She has no national or racial vanity. In that sense, Ortiz Cofer is the most American of Latino writers. Like Thoreau, she is a writer intoxicated with the personal, enamored with a democracy that leaves the individual alone to struggle with

internal demons. Like Emerson, her poetry is her faith.

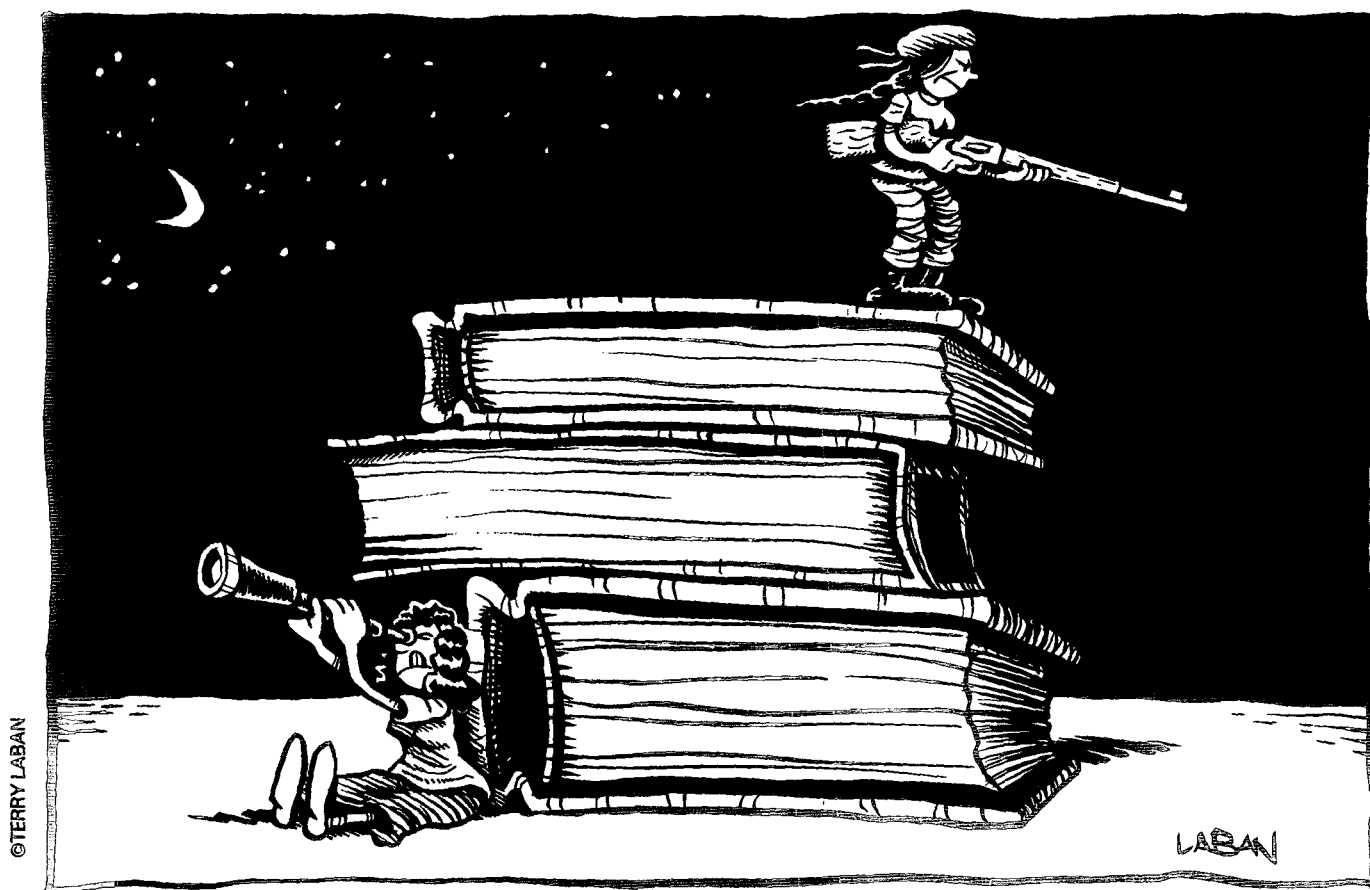
Her novel, *The Line of the Sun*, chronicling the years from the Depression to the '60s, is sweet and amorphous. Her autobiographical essays, particularly "Silent Dancing," about growing up in Paterson, N.J., are touching and impressive. Her Puerto Ricanness is neither intrusive nor exclusive. I once heard Ortiz Cofer address the questions most frequently put to her: If you consider yourself a Puerto Rican writer, why do you write in English? And, what are you doing living in Georgia? "This is what being a Puerto Rican means to me," she answered unequivocally. "To claim my heritage, to drink the life-giving *aguas buenas*, to eat the mango fruit of the knowledge of good and evil that grows in the Borinquen of my grandmother's tales. And also, to claim the language of my education, English, as well as the culture and literature of the country my parents chose as home for me. To claim both places. And so I plant my little writer's flag on both shores. There are exclusivists that would try to coerce me to take sides. I do not find that I need to make such decision any more than Isaac Bashevis Singer needed to give up being Jewish when he wrote his universal stories. ... My books are neither Puerto Rican immigrant history nor sociological case studies."

Moraga, on the other hand, understands literature as sister to politics. Born in Whittier, Calif., (also in 1952), she puts art at the service of anger. "Sometimes when I write," she notes, "I feel I am drawing from the most silent place in myself—a place without image, word, shape, sound—to create a portrait of la Mechicana before the 'Fall,' before shame, before betrayal, before Eve, Malinche and Guadalupe; before the occupation of Aztlán, *la llegada de los españoles*, the Aztecs' War of Flowers." In her eyes, the writer's odyssey is a journey of social discovery and commitment, a text is a *j'accuse*. Moraga recognizes the cosmic forces constantly affecting our behavior. Our sexuality, our self, our schizophrenic identity—all have to be reclaimed, remastered, rearticulated, repossessed. Thus, to write is to recognize ourselves as ideological animals. She writes



The Latin Deli
By Judith Ortiz Cofer
University of Georgia Press
172 pp., \$19.95

The Last Generation
By Cherríe Moraga
South End Press
197 pp., \$14



about herself and others in a February 1990 poem entitled "Ni for El Salvador":

*I am a woman nearing forty without children.
I am an artist nearing forty without community.
I am a lesbian nearing forty without partner.
I am a Chicana nearing forty without country.*

*And if it were safe, I'd spread open my thighs
and let the whole world in
and birth and birth and birth life.
The dissolution of self, the dissolution of borders.*

*But it is not safe.
Ni for me.
Ni for El Salvador.*

For both Ortiz Cofer and Moraga, literature offers a kind of redemption—but Moraga sees redemption of the individual alone as suicide, whereas for Ortiz Cofer redemption has almost nothing to do with prescriptive virtue. Ortiz Cofer approaches words for memory's sake and perceives literature as the recognition of the particular. Moraga uses art to illuminate diversity and sees the pulse of literature as directly linked to the universal salvation of humanity.

Enlightening and always surprising, *The Latin Deli* can

easily be recognized as vintage Ortiz Cofer. Dedicated to her daughter Tanya, the delicate volume opens with a symbolic poem, subtitled "Ars Poetica," which reduces the universe to a kind of curative store, a *bodega* in which customers look for a medicine for their disheartened spirit:

*Presiding over a formica counter,
plastic Mother and Child magnetized
to the top of an ancient register,
the heady mix of smells from the open bins
of dried codfish, the green plantains
hanging in stalks like votive offerings,
she is the Patroness of Exiles,
a woman of no-age who was never pretty,
who spends her days selling canned memories
while listening to the Puerto Rican complain
that it would be cheaper to fly to San Juan
than to buy a pound of Bustello coffee here,
and to Cubans perfecting their speech
of a "glorious return" to Havana—where no one
has been allowed to die and nothing to change until then;
to Mexicans who pass through, talking lyrically
of dólares to be made in El Norte—
all waiting the comfort
of spoken Spanish.*

The store is made to represent ghetto life, a tiny cor-

ner in which the protagonist, a goddess with unlimited powers, is forced to live in exile. The rest of *The Latin Deli* is an exploration of various aspects of the corner: the relationship between mainland and island Puerto Ricans, the myth of the Latina woman, assimilation to the American Dream.

In the first half of the book, subtitled "From the Book of Dreams in Spanish," Ortiz Cofer returns to autobiography, remembering her father, the music of the Beatles, the day President Kennedy was shot. The pieces are carefully crafted, powerful in their inner feeling—oscillating between past and present, between Hormigueros and Paterson, between Spanish and English, between satisfaction and blessedness on the one hand and anxiety on the other. The writer sets out a memory, and then proceeds to analyze it. But the act of interpreting the past is not aggressive; on the contrary, lyrical evocation and interpretation go hand in hand. Politics are not on Ortiz Cofer's agenda.

The second part, "The Medium's Burden," while continuing the same preoccupation with the personal, is more focused on the act of writing. It contains one of the best autobiographical pieces by Ortiz Cofer, one often reprinted: "The Story of My Body." From the first sentence on it summarizes her intellectual and physical journey: "I was born a white girl in Puerto Rico but became a brown girl when I came to live in the United States."

The real secret of Ortiz Cofer's stories and poems is probably life itself. By rejecting the blur of universalism, she becomes fully universal: a writer talking about small things attractive to all. She refuses to adapt her writing to the current literary fashion, rejecting fancy and easy affirmation. Her art, like life, is painful, sudden, frustrating.

If anything, what links *The Latin Deli* to Moraga's *The Last Generation*—essentially different books by opposing and opposed artists—is the hybridization of literary genres. Both books refuse to separate poetry from prose. Instead, they offer what I would call "literary miscegenation," the intercourse between different narrative forms. But Moraga's objective in intertwining poetry and prose is unlike Ortiz Cofer's: while one is a militant speaker, a promoter of resistance and affirmation whose importance is not literary but historical, the other is an artist, a transcendent inventor.

In *The Last Generation*, Moraga's language is labored, ideologically charged: She perceives herself as a soldier in the culture and identity wars, and, not surprisingly, has been seized upon by feminists and multiculturalists as an emblem of America's "internal revolution."

"I complete this book 500 years after the arrival of Cristóbal Colón," she writes. "Its publication reflects a minor Mexican moment in an otherwise indifferent world literary history. Colón's accidental arrival to these lands, on the other hand, was an event of catastrophic consequence to the world, literary and otherwise. Still, in my mind, the two events are somehow intimately connected—the violent collision between the European and the Indigenous, the birth of a *colonization* that would give birth to me."

Moraga begins the volume, a sequel of sorts to her 1983 *Loving in the War Years*, by describing her role as a lesbian writer in her family and community. "My family is beginning to feel its disintegration," she writes. "Our Mexican grandmother of ninety-six years has been dead

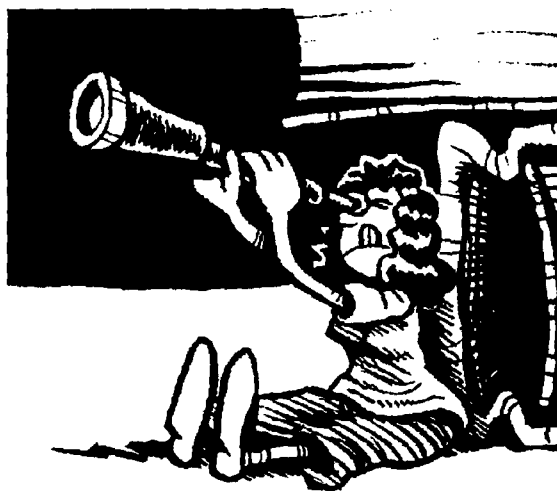
two years now and *la familia's* beginning to go. Ignoring this, it increases in number. I am the only one who doesn't ignore this because I am the only one not contributing to the population. My line of family stops with me. There will be no one calling me *Mami, Mamá, Abuelita...*" She continues by touching on topics as varied as the Nicaraguan Revolution; the "inconsequential" men in her life; sexual identity and repression; colonialism. Disregarding the reader's limited fluency, her language travels freely, effortlessly from English to Span-

ish. Her references are to Navajo Indians, to the Chicano movement of the '60s, to Malcolm X.

For Moraga, literature is a weapon. In her autobiographical pieces, characters aren't free; they don't act by themselves but are acted upon. Not surprisingly, her opinionated work is highly predictable and often stale. It seems to me doomed because it is created to fulfill reader's expectations and because it fashions a literature that divides the world too neatly into victims and colonialists.

Clearly, the abyss that separates Judith Ortiz Cofer and Cherrie Moraga, one that ultimately and sadly splits American letters today across ethnic lines, is not only based on the need to perceive a single corner of the world as one's entire universe or the universe as our home. It's a far deeper, less bridgeable abyss that points to the value one gives to the act of writing: one sees writing as exploration, the other as explosion. The explosive writers may gain immediate attention, but only the explorers will win a place on the eternal shelf of classics. ◀

Ilan Stavans, a Mexican novelist and critic, teaches at Amherst College. His latest books are *Tropical Synagogues* (Holmes & Meier) and *The Hispanic Condition* (HarperCollins). He is currently editing *The Oxford Book of Latin American Essays*.



Into the abyss

By Kenneth Zapp

No American suffers the tragedies in Yugoslavia more, or understands their broader meaning better, than Bogdan Denitch. An ethnic Serb with dual American and Yugoslav passports who lives in Croatia, Denitch is uniquely qualified to describe and explain the dynamics of the nationalism that destroyed Tito's Yugoslavia and that could threaten other states around the globe.

Denitch approaches the complex causes of Yugoslavia's death as if peeling layers of an onion. Though a ruthless editor might have beneficially imposed external discipline, the author's style fits the contradictions rampant in the Balkans.

At the core, however, Denitch is absolutely clear. In the late '80s, Serbian insistence upon imposing their authority over the Albanian majority in the region of Kosovo split the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) into competing parties and effectively killed the federal government.

Serb control of Kosovo required constant violation of Albanian rights, which produced the threat of harsh European sanctions. When Slovenes and Croats, fearing economic costs, protested, Serbs tried to take over the LCY and the collective presidency. Serb nationalist Slobodan Milosevic put his people in power in Montenegro and Vojvodina and demanded greater Serb influence at the federal level. As a result, candidates favoring a strong federal government were discredited and lost to local nationalists in Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Macedonia in the 1990 republic elections.

The central role of Kosovo in the Yugoslav tragedy, unfortunately, seems to have eluded American policy-makers in both the Clinton and Bush administrations. Back in 1989, Milosevic told the Slovene member of the collective presidency that he would compromise on everything but Kosovo. Events in the Croatian region of Krajina as well as in Bosnia later verified his willingness to undercut his Serb allies when finally pushed.

Denitch is generous with his contributions to what has become a complex and contentious debate. First, he argues that the party's refusal to allow multi-party elections after Tito's death in 1980 reduced the chances for democracy to succeed when elections were finally held a decade later. As fellow progressives have long argued with respect to right-wing dictatorships, the rejection of moderate democratic reforms makes radical change inevitable. In Yugoslavia, this

meant that democrats throughout the country who tried to work with the party lost credibility, while radical nationalists gained popularity.

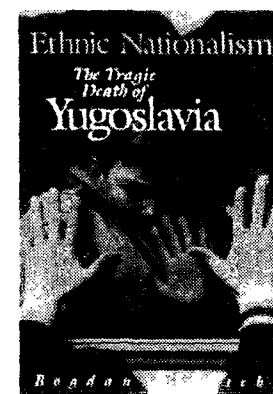
Denitch describes in detail how other participants contributed to the disaster. Slovenes aggressively attacked Yugoslav border posts, insuring violent reprisals by the Yugoslav Army. Croatian President Franjo Tudjman stoked Serb fears by removing them from positions in the police force and in the courts. Germany and Austria pushed Europe to recognize Croatian sovereignty prematurely. Yugoslav Army officers, blinded by obsolete ideology, viewed all decentralists and democrats as fascists. The media, controlled by the new nationalist governments in the republics, fed citizens a daily diet of vicious ethnic propaganda.

Curiously, Denitch omits the Bosnian government's irresponsible declaration of sovereignty from Yugoslavia in 1992. Bosnia has never been a state; instead, it was a multi-ethnic region contested by competing empires for centuries. Serbs, one-third of the population, always considered it rightfully part of Serbia, or at least of the Yugoslav federation, where their interests could be represented. While the abhorrent Serb atrocities can never be justified, unqualified Western recognition of Bosnia has impeded efforts to resolve the crisis.

Most alarming, though, is Denitch's description of alienated youth throughout the republics. Without work or other anchors in their lives, many of the post-Tito generation have become putty in the hands of hate-mongers.

Here Denitch underestimates the impact of the economic crisis during the '80s. During the last three decades of Tito's rule, Yugoslavia had one of the world's highest rates of economic growth. But four-digit inflation reversed this trend, cutting the living standards of many Yugoslavians in half. Sudden poverty without hope became the fertile ground for purveyors of ethnic hatred.

Denitch is at his best when talking about what his life has been like as a Serb in Croatia, his personal efforts to develop



Ethnic Nationalism: The Tragic Death of Yugoslavia

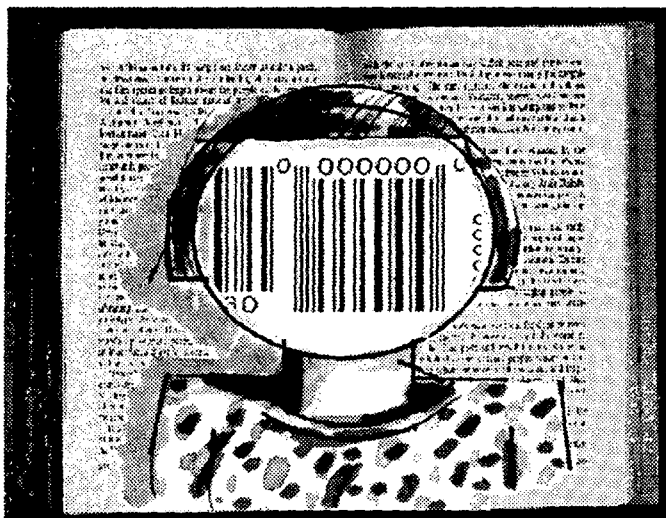
By Bogdan Denitch
University of Minnesota Press

222 pp., \$17.95

a social democratic party that spans national groups, and his detailed descriptions of the historical developments of the Yugoslav nationalities and their conflicts. His warnings about nationalism's challenge to democracy are absolutely essential for citizens and policy-makers alike.

Kenneth Zapp teaches at Metropolitan State University in Minneapolis.

S P E E D R E A D I N G



**A Woman's Life: The Story of an Ordinary American
and Her Extraordinary Generation**

By Susan Cheever

Morrow

254 pp., \$20

As a young girl growing up in Passaic, N.J., in the '50s, Linda Green was a dutiful daughter, carefully groomed and well behaved, a girl who could not say no to the demands of niceness. In *A Woman's Life*, her biography of this ordinary woman and a reflection on the broader experience of her generation, Susan Cheever describes Green's emergence as a popular teenager, a model student and cheerleader who carefully "follow[ed] her mother's instructions to act the part of a girl who was having fun, even when she wasn't having fun."

When Linda finally reached the age of rebellion (hers and the country's) in the late '60s, she did not so much rebel as shift her allegiances—from her family to her new husband, a high school sweetheart turned hippie who insisted, much to her dismay, upon an open marriage. She dutifully supported his full-time hippiedom and set aside inheritance money for him to finance his dream of a commune.

Only by shedding her first husband and setting out on a teaching career in the '70s was Green able to achieve a real identity of her own. Today, she's given up the faux-rebellion of her younger years and settled into what Cheever calls "a routine that is both conventional and bourgeois" with her second husband and two young children.

If the story of Linda Green seems to resonate, perhaps a bit too neatly, with those of others in her generation, this is no coincidence. Cheever, a novelist and the author of *Home Before Dark*, a memoir of life with her father John Cheever, set out quite deliberately (with the help of two demographers) to track down an ordinary woman whose life would

be in some ways representative of the lives lived by those in her generation. After interviewing several possible candidates, she settled upon Green, whose "life seemed to exist in the shadow of her generation," as her most promising subject.

But it is unreasonable to expect any one life (however "typical") to carry the symbolic weight of an entire generation. In rendering Green's life as a series of sociological lessons, Cheever effaces much of its true idiosyncrasy. Intent on showing the ways in which the needs of others impinged upon Linda Green's life, Cheever—like so many others in Green's past—ends up reducing her subject to an object.

—David Futrelle

Dear Anne Frank

By Marjorie Agosín

Azul Editions

72 pp., \$11.95

In her haunting new bilingual collection of poems, *Dear Anne Frank*, Chilean writer and human rights activist Marjorie Agosín lets unfold a remarkable relationship with the teenage Jewish girl who perished in the death camp of Bergen-Belsen. These poems reek of cruelty, of an almost-palpable fear. But they are also heartrendingly tender, bringing to light the life of one child, of flesh and blood and dreams—and, through her, the lives of *all* of those who have been hounded, tortured, jailed, "disappeared" for the unpardonable sin of being "other," and therefore expendable.

Translated with remarkable clarity by Richard Schaaf, the poems are both lush with exquisite imagery and unsparingly brutal. They follow Anne from the pre-war streets of Amsterdam to the famous secret attic. And, from there, into the arms of the "gentlemen of the Gestapo," who "listened to Mozart / read embalmed leatherbound books / rejoiced in the / sacred order of / families..." but who were also capable of the most unspeakable atrocities.

Agosín asks the questions that can never be answered, addressing the small, frail things that spell out the fabric of a life: did Anne dream of love? Of a bridal gown? How did she like to wear her hair? In the end, one question remains: "Why did so many people submit and obey?" And, implicit in that, what of you and I in like circumstances?

*Would it have been possible to take in the Jews,
the squalid gypsies?
Was it possible to whisper in their blackened ears
that even in Amsterdam torn asunder
someone loved them,
would rescue them from the chill of death?*

Such questions are central to our time; they can never be asked often enough. (Azul Editions, 2030 Belmont Road, NW, Washington, DC 20009.)

—Chris Faatz

C L A S S I F I E D S

► HELP WANTED

EDITOR: GROWING MEDIA company seeks experienced Editors to direct alternative newsweeklies in Detroit and Columbus (OH). We are committed to: editorial excellence, nourishing work environments, cultural diversity, investigative projects and journalism as a force for social change. You should be: an experienced reporter and manager, an exceptional motivator and developer of young talent, acquainted with the thrills and spills of investigative reporting and able to lead by example. Excellent salary and benefit package including profit sharing. Send letter of intro, 3 clips and references to: Editor Search, Metro Times, Inc. 743 Beaubien, Detroit, MI 48226.

LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE: Performs professional union work. Responsible for representing individuals, groups of workers and the local before the state, its offices, local governments and private employers. Organizes in the private and public sectors. Performs contract negotiations and related work as

required. Interested candidates should send a résumé to: CWA Local 1032, 900 Brunswick Ave., Trenton, NJ 08638, Attn: Personnel Committee.

POLITICAL ORGANIZER- The Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador is seeking a full-time, experienced organizer to coordinate volunteers and implement educational programs. Send résumé to CISPES, Attn. Directive Committee, 3411 W. Diversey #18, Chicago, IL 60647.

UNION ORGANIZERS: National labor union seeks organizing directors/lead organizers to perform a central role in building a progressive industrial union. Must be able to recruit, train

and direct the work of other organizers in large campaigns or regional organizing programs. Minimum two years' organizing experience with a solid record of helping workers to form unions. Must be willing to relocate or travel. Salary negotiable, excellent fringe benefits. Send résumé to OCAW-SPD, P.O. Box 281200, Lakewood, CO 80228.

COMMUNITY JOBS: The Employment Newspaper for the Non-Profit Sector. Join over 50,000 job-seekers in reading a unique monthly publication containing more than 200 new job listings (in Environment, Arts, International, Health, Youth, Civil

Rights, Housing, Human Services, etc.). Featuring informative articles, book reviews, resource lists, profiles of non-profit organizations and the people who found them. Contact: ACCESS, 50 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108, (617) 720-5627.

► PUBLICATIONS

THE OLD FART: A magazine for and by curmudgeons. Send \$10 check for a one-year subscription to this quarterly publication to: Box 83509, 199 Avenue Rd. Toronto, Canada M5R 3S2 (Tel/FAX 416-975-2614) or send \$20, one for yourself and one for your favorite curmudgeon.

► BOOKS

Free metaphysical booklist: Astrology, crystals, Earth changes, healing...etc.! Sunbooks, Box 5588 (ITT), Santa Fe, NM 87502-5588.

SINGLE BOOKLOVERS, a national group, has been getting unattached people acquainted since 1970. Box 117, Gradyville, PA 19039. (215) 358-5049.

OUT-OF-PRINT bookfinder. Send wants: 2035(ITT) Everding, Eureka, CA 95503.

Imperialism, Inner-Cities, Activism, Feminism, etc...

Free catalog:
Real Books

1518 W. Thorndale,
Chicago, IL 60660

JEWISH CURRENTS

July-Aug. 1994 issue

"Right Wing vs. Peace Process," editorial; "Idol-Smashing Still,"

Leonard Fein; "Peace — Shalom — Salaam," Rabbi Herbert N. Brockman; "Critique of 'Politics of Meaning'," Todd Gitlin; "Max Weinreich (1894-1969)," Eli Katz.

Single issue: \$3.

Subscription: \$30 yearly (USA).

JEWISH CURRENTS

Dept. T, Suite 601

22 E. 17 St., New York, NY 10003

1994 Summer Conference Union for Radical Political Economics URPE Job Summit

Litchfield, Connecticut,
August 20-23, 1994

Is full employment possible in today's global economy? If it is, how do we get there? If it isn't, what then? These and other themes in economics and politics will be explored at the URPE Summer Conference.

Plenary speakers include: Eileen Applebaum • David Barkin • Lourdes Beneria • Ron Blackwell • Barbara Ehrenreich • Dan Faber • Robin Hahnel • Cecilia Rodriguez.

Join scores of scholars, students, journalists, and activists in rural Connecticut. Besides the serious stuff, there will be parties and recreation too. Childcare available.

For information write the URPE National Office, Dept. of Economics, Univ. of California, Riverside, CA 92521, or phone 909-787-5037, ext. 1580.

BREW YOUR OWN BEER!

Cool catalog, great selection, terrific prices.

ASHEVILLE BREWERS SUPPLY

2 Wall Street #117
Asheville, NC

Barricada Internacional
Monthly news and analysis
straight from Nicaragua.
Sample free! \$30.00/year.
Barricada-I, PO Box
410150 SF, CA 94141

NOAM CHOMSKY ON VIDEO

Two-hour videos: lectures, Q&A.

Titles include: *Prospects for Democracy*; *Peace with Justice*; *Clinton's Vision II*; *Third World at Home*; *Totalitarian Values*; *Free Trade*; *New Interview*; *Pentagon System*; *Creeping Fascism*; many more.

Murray Bookchin: *Democracy*

Two-hour video \$20.00.

Transcripts \$6.00.

Check or money order to:

TURNING THE TIDE

76 1/2 Lincoln Ave.

St. Albans, VT 05478

PH: 802-524-0478

Our Right To Know Braille Press, Inc.



For blind and print-handicapped persons, FII - FREEDOM IDEAS INTERNATIONAL, a quarterly review of minority and independent publications, includes selected articles from IN THESE TIMES. Produced by Our Right to Know Braille Press, Inc., on 4-track 15/16 ips cassette tape. A 4-issue subscription costs \$5.

The Our Right to Know Braille Press, Inc.

640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217

CAXTON BOOKSEARCH. Box 220, Ellison Bay, WI 54210. We'll order or search any book. (800) 288-7724.

JOB SECURITY IN AMERICA, a book on how 60 people view life in a world where job security no longer exists. \$20. ABN 1190 Encinitas Blvd, #123F, Encinitas, CA 92024.

► SPANISH

SPANISH, TOURS, Minicourses. ESCUELA AZTECA. Summer in beautiful Cuernavaca. \$220 each two weeks. Spanish: all levels. Tours: pyramids, revolutionary murals. Study with Professor Ross Gandy (Mexico:

Perspective You can learn more **Spanish** reading the news

- ◆ World news monthly
- ◆ Intermediate Spanish
- ◆ Bilingual glossary
- ◆ \$25 subscription

EDUCATIONAL NEWS SERVICE
Box 60478-ITT, FLORENCE, MA 01060
◆ Ask about: **Standpunkt** in German
1-800-600-4494
Free Brochure

RARE VIDEO

Discover FACETS VIDEO's astonishing collection of 20,000 foreign, classic American, silent, documentary, fine arts and children's videos and laser disks that you will simply not find anywhere else. Purchase or rent by mail. FACETS VIDEO, 1517 W. Fullerton, Chicago 60614
FREE SAMPLER CATALOG: 1-800-331-6197

Reform or Revolution? Aztecs, Mayas, Juarez, Mexican Revolution. Live with a Mexican family. Brochure. Call (52-73) 15-24-69, or write: Apdo. Postal 76-005; 04201, Mexico, D.F.

CENTRO MAYA de ESPANOL: Indigenous men/women-owned collective in beautiful Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, offers immersion Spanish/Maya language studies. 5 hours daily individual instruction, complete R&B with loving Guatemalteco family—\$110 per week. Call (817) 696-3319.

► TRAVEL

WALKABOUT, bimonthly newsletter promoting travel as a learning experience. Articles, anecdotes and advice for the responsible, respectful adventure traveler. \$12/year, \$2/sample. POB 5143, Portsmouth, NH 03802-5143.

► FOR RENT

CHICAGO—SMALL OFFICE SPACE available for business or personal

GOOD VIBRATIONS

Friendly, informative catalogs of sex toys, books & videos, \$4.

1210 Valencia #1T
San Francisco, CA 94110

use. \$150/month includes utilities. Use of office equipment negotiable. Call Jim Weinstein at (312) 772-0100.

► ORGANIZATIONS

PENDULUM CO-OP. Free help in finding information on any subject. Send SASE and requests: P.O. Box 24610, Baltimore, MD 21214.

► PERSONALS

RUSSIA-SCANDINAVIA-ROMANIA-USA, etc. Correspondence for sincere professionals worldwide. Scanna International, P.O. Box 4-ITT, Pittsford, NY 14534. (800) 677-3170 anytime.

CONCERNED SINGLES Newsletter links singles concerned about environment, peace, social justice, gender equality, personal growth. Nationwide. All ages. Free sample: Box 555-T, Stockbridge, MA 01262.

► MISCELLANEOUS

JOIN US TO BUILD HOME together: Semi-shared mountain spirit space, views, redwoods, meadows. 26-plus acres north of Santa Cruz. \$60,000-120,000. Financing. Box 983, Boulder Creek, CA 95006. Welcome Home.

VISION QUEST/WOMEN'S QUEST, Dakota Sioux Teachings, Drum Making. Antelope Retreat Center, Box 166, Savery, WY 82332. (307) 383-2625.

IS YOUR PET SUFFERING? FLEAS? Skin problems? Learn what vets don't tell you!! Rush \$9.95 for two informative booklets! Natural for Animals, 514 37th St. N., St. Petersburg, FL 33713.

FIBER ARTS SUPPLIES: spinning wheels, handlooms, fibers, books, equipment. Catalog \$3. Fiber McGee's Closet, Rt. 3, Box 66, Richmond, MO 64085. (816) 776-2252.

DISTRIBUTORS NEEDED: All Natural Health Products. Nutrition. Sports Fitness. Weight Management. Free Sign Up. (716) 985-4042.

RADICAL WALKING TOURS—Learn the legacy of Malcolm X, Abbie Hoffman, Emma Goldman and more in N.Y.C. (718) 492-0069.

FREE WORKER CO-OP PRODUCTS CATALOG, plus free help starting cooperatives. Send SASE to Pendulum Co-op, P.O. Box 24610, Baltimore, MD 21214.

The Religious Right is Wrong!

Thomas Paine knew what he was talking about when he warned that "of all tyrannies the worst is religious tyranny." Thus, predictably, the Bible extremists are again on the march in an attempt to control our law makers and convert democracy into theocracy. The dynamic literature we offer combats the obscurantist tyrants from historical, philosophical, scientific, and sociological perspectives.

Catalog \$2.00 ppd. (USA only)

INDEPENDENT PUBLICATIONS
PO BOX 102, Ridgefield, NJ 07657

IN THESE TIMES Classified Ads Work Like Your Own Sales Force.

Word Rates:

95¢ per word / 1-2 issues
85¢ per word / 3-5 issues
80¢ per word / 6-9 issues
75¢ per word / 10-19 issues
65¢ per word / 20+ issues

Display Inch Rates:

\$30 per inch / 1-2 issues
\$28 per inch / 3-5 issues
\$26 per inch / 6-9 issues
\$24 per inch / 10-19 issues
\$22 per inch / 20+ issues

Classified ads must be prepaid. Send your copy, coupon, and payment to:
IN THESE TIMES, Classified Ads,
2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

Enclosed is my check for \$_____ for _____ issue(s).

Please indicate desired heading _____

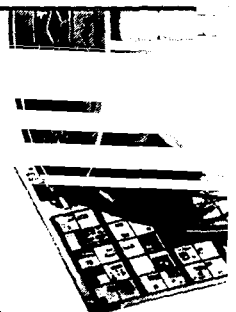
Advertiser _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

This publication is available in microform from University Microfilms International.

Call toll-free 800-521-3044. In Michigan, Alaska and Hawaii call collect 313-761-4700. Or mail inquiry to: University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.



Continued from page 40

public time. And fiber optic compression promises an electronic Narcissus at the Pond, an individualistic utopia of personalized programming where no two people need ever turn on to the same thing. But they also create nostalgia for test patterns, for a time when viewing, even of trifles, was communal.

On June 17, 1994, millions gawked at the image of a white Ford Bronco cruising along Southern California freeways. O.J. Simpson, a new truant of the criminal justice system, sat inside the vehicle, reportedly with a pistol pointed at his famous head. But for more than a hour the cameras, looking down from above, recorded the minimalist image of a white Bronco on a bare highway. It might have been Kasimir Malevich's barren canvas "White on White" or Andy Warhol's soporific cinematic study *Sleep*.

Nothing much happened during the freeway drive, and even professional patterer Larry King strained for useful commentary on CNN. Yet the spectacle was impossible to escape—those who flipped channels discovered duplicates on the other stations. The white Ford Bronco garnered a combined market share of 67. In the following weeks, the live network coverage of Simpson's preliminary hearing offered a popular sequel to the most riveting real-time events in broadcast history—the bombing of Baghdad, the first moon landing, Jack Ruby's shooting of Lee Harvey Oswald.

This is not to deny the atrocity of a double homicide committed under, as the indictment puts it, "special circumstances." But the butchery of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman was incidental to the special telecasts of O. J. on the freeway and in municipal court. For more than an hour on a late spring evening, an estimated 95 million Americans united to monitor traffic. Millions more, in the weeks to follow, gazed at dreary testimony by a cutlery clerk and a limousine driver.

The Simpson case arrived just in time to fill the ether left by the death of Jackie Onassis. It is a vacuum filled by a void plugging the abyss. Not even the serials and talk shows pre-empted by the Simpson hearing could compete for tedium with the depositions and interrogations about a red stain on the Bronco door or nocturnal thumps on Kato Kaelin's guesthouse wall. The dullness of it all dispels the dread of murder, levels the celebrity defendant, and unites a splintered nation. On a larger scale than the Pledge of Allegiance, the Simpson coverage is banality in the service of solidarity.

If moral witness were the motive, images of slaughter in Rwanda and Bosnia, not zircon trinkets and headache pills, would routinely dominate TV screens. The Simpson broadcasts were driven by ratings, by collective voyeurism rather than a national conscience. Stations cut—and viewers stuck—to the spectacle of the white Ford Bronco for the same reason that millions who never watch football tune in to the Super Bowl. We crave the company. ◀

Steven G. Kellman is professor of comparative literature at The University of Texas at San Antonio and film critic for *The Texas Observer*.



Subscribe to ITT!

☐ NEW SUBSCRIPTION.

You'll receive your first issue in 4-6 weeks. Please check price and terms below. AST1

☐ RENEW NOW.

We'll extend your current subscription for as long as you like. This saves you worries about expiring and helps us save money and the environment by not sending renewal notices and bills. ART1

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

MOVING:

Fill out old address above, and new address below. Allow 4-6 weeks for change.

NEW ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

☐ WHAT A GREAT GIFT IDEA!

(Just try and find a gift with more thought behind it. Fill out your name above and the lucky person's name here.) XSTH1

NAME OF RECIPIENT _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PRICES & TERMS.....

- ☐ One year, 26 issues: \$35.95 ☐ Six months, 13 issues: \$19.95
☐ Institutional, one year: \$59.00
☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Bill me Charge my ☐ Visa ☐ MC

ACCOUNT NUMBER / EXPIRATION DATE _____

Canadian orders, add: \$27.50 (one year), \$13.50 (six months) postage. All other foreign orders add: \$41.00 (one year), \$20.50 (six months).

Mail to: IN THESE TIMES Customer Service,
308 Pitt St., Mt. Morris, IL 61054

Or call: 1-800-827-0270

All together now

IN THE END

More than 40 years ago, Jackie Gleason broke his leg. While actors are supposed to break a leg, the fracture is rarely broadcast live on network television. Gleason's unexpected mishap, in the midst of a performance, was extraordinary because it was viewed simultaneously by most Americans with a television set. In the early '50s, when TV was still a magnetic novelty, everyone who could watch, watched. And all gazed at identical images.

With barely four channels in any city, the proto-capitalist medium could not yet rival Baskin-Robbins or the supermarket cereal aisle as a paradigmatic panoply of consumer options. It was not uncommon for popular programs such as *I Love Lucy* to draw Nielsen rating points of more than 50—to count on having more than half the existing TV sets tuned to them. In the current age of narrowcasting, no show can boast such an impossibly high rating.

Phatic speech, linguists explain, is sound devoid of semantic significance, used purely in the service of communion—like the banal greeting “Hello.” TV test patterns, those bull’s-eye images that were designed to help adjust focus and that, before infomercials and Conan O’Brien, filled the screen throughout the night, were examples of phatic broadcasting.

Test patterns mark the degree zero of video, and, like the 60-second buzz used to test radio’s emergency broadcast system, they merely register the fact that a signal is being transmitted. Though virtually devoid of content, test patterns can mesmerize viewers with the sheer power of disinterested contact.

Today, tape detaches programming from real,

Continued on page 39